

*Do You have a*  
**Sanitary Sewer**  
*Backup Problem?*

The City of Decatur has a program to help stop wet weather sewer back-ups in your home. The program is available to homeowners within the City of Decatur city limits.

This brochure gives overview of the “Sanitary Sewer Backup Prevention Program” to eliminate the constant fear that a backup will happen again.

**Visit**

<https://www.decaturl.gov/departments/public-works/sanitary-sewer-backup-prevention-program/>

or

call 217-424-2747 for more information and application forms.

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City of Decatur  
Public Works Department  
One Gary K. Anderson Plaza  
Decatur, IL 62523

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**Sanitary Sewer  
Backup Prevention  
Program**

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**What is an overhead sewer and how  
do you get one?**

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## Sanitary Sewer Backup Prevention Program & what is an Overhead Sewer System?

The City of Decatur has a financial assistance program for Decatur homeowners who have had wet weather sewer backup problems. The program will pay 100% of the cost—up to \$10,000—for the installation of an “overhead sewer system,” described below. Properties receiving assistance from the program will be required to have any illegal connections such as footing drains, sump pumps, downspouts, or storm drains disconnected from the sanitary sewer at the property owner’s expense. Property owners must permit the City to inspect the property for those connections prior to approval for participation in the program to insure compliance with City ordinance.



An “Overhead Sewer System” is much like a sump pump for waste water. The floor drains and any plumbing fixtures in your house that are lower than the City’s sewer system manhole elevations will be disconnected. Plumbing from those fixtures will be re-routed to a sealed tank. Inside the tank, an ejector pump lifts the waste water into new plumbing before dumping into your existing sewer line. Often the new plumbing is connected “overhead” to pipes that lead out of your house and dump into the sewer line. Since the fixtures in the lower level are no longer directly connected to the sewer line, they cannot experience a backup. Plumbing fixtures in your home that are above the manholes of the city sewer system do not be routed through the ejector pump system.



## The Application Process

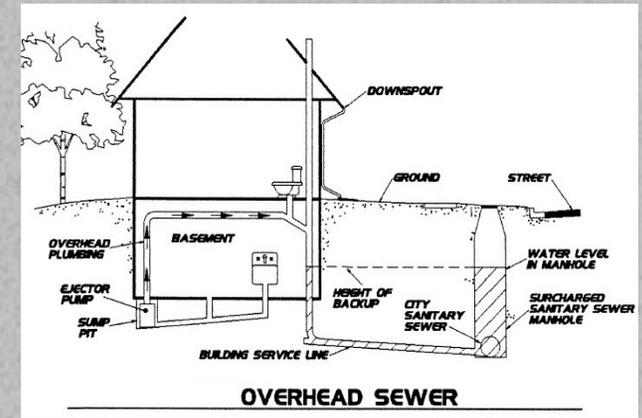
Homeowners should contact the City’s Public Works Department to begin the application process for an overhead sewer system. Applications must be accompanied by proof of prior backups to be eligible for the program. Upon approval of the application homeowners shall submit at least two estimates from licensed plumbers. Reimbursement will be made based on the lowest estimated cost. The City will reimburse 100% of the cost up to a maximum of \$10,000, and you as homeowner will be required to pay the balance. The vast majority of overhead sewer systems typically cost less than \$7,500 making the typical homeowner’s share of the cost zero.

## Completing the Work

Once the plumber’s proposal is approved, the homeowner should contract with the plumber and have the installation completed. The plumber will be required to obtain all necessary permits with the City of Decatur. **No work shall be done prior to the approval of the applications.** The installation shall be inspected by the City of Decatur Plumbing Inspector when the work is completed.

## Paying the Bill

After the inspector approves the installation homeowners will then request for the contractor to be paid or for reimbursement. Payment will be made by check to the property owner if they paid the contractor up front or payment will be made directly to the contractor when work is completed. It may take up to three weeks for the check to be sent. The City of Decatur is not responsible of any future maintenance or replacement costs for the overhead sewer system and the homeowner has full ownership of the overhead sewer system.



## Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I own rental properties, are those properties eligible? **Yes.** City Council recently approved the eligibility of rental properties. The owner of the property must be the one to complete the application.

Q: I know someone who can do plumbing work but they aren’t licensed through the City. Can They still complete the work for me? **No.** All plumbing contractors must be licensed by the State of Illinois.

Q: Will every property who meets the criteria be approved? **No.** There is funding allocated for this project annually. The properties will be chosen on a first come first serve basis with extreme cases taking priority.

Q: This brochure states that 100% of the cost are covered up to \$10,000. Is that correct? **Yes!** The homeowner will not have to pay for the overhead sewer system as long as it is under \$10,000. However, the homeowner is responsible for the disconnection of any illegal connections to the sanitary sewer.

Q: Will I have to pay any money upfront for the Overhead Sewer? **There are two options to pay.** You may pay your contractor and be reimbursed via check by the City of Decatur, or you may request for the Contractor to be paid directly by the City if less than \$10,000. If the cost is greater than the max funding, the homeowner will be required to pay the Contractor their portion prior to receiving the City portion.

Q: Which Contractors do you recommend to complete this work? **Any plumbing contractor can complete the work as long as they are licensed through the State of Illinois.**