

QUICK STEP BY STEP:

- Homeowners are notified by mail and with door hangers at least one week before testing their area.
- Upon notice, homeowners should pour water down all drains to fill traps.
- Smoke is injected by contractors into the sewer system and may be seen around manhole covers, storm drains, roof vents and areas of defects.
- During the process, homeowners do not need to be home and can continue using facilities as normal.
- Defects are identified, documented and photographed.
- Any visible smoke will dissipate within a few minutes with adequate ventilation.
- Owners are notified by mail with information on defects they are responsible to correct.

The Stege Sanitary District greatly appreciates the cooperation residents have extended in helping protect the health and safety of the District and all its customers.

STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM SMOKE TESTING



Stege Sanitary District
7500 Schmidt Lane
El Cerrito, CA 94530

PHONE: (510) 524-4667
FAX: (510) 524-4697

www.stegesandistrict.org



SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM SMOKE TESTING

WHY? Smoke testing is an efficient and cost effective way to locate and identify the source of storm water infiltration problems. Testing is important because each year millions of gallons of storm water infiltrates sanitary sewers and can overload the system, pump stations and treatment plant.

The *sanitary sewer system* is designed for only wastewater from homes and businesses to flow to a treatment plant. The *storm water drainage system* is a separate network of pipes channeling storm water into creeks and waterways and directly into the Bay.

The infiltration of storm water in any amount into the sanitary sewer system can cause and contribute to the overflow of untreated wastewater during storm events and potentially results in environmental and property damage.

HOW? The smoke testing process involves blowing smoke through the sanitary sewer system to locate any defects and storm drain cross connections where prohibited storm water may be entering the sanitary sewer system.

WHAT? The smoke manufactured specifically for testing is a non-toxic, non-staining substance that is harmless to humans, pets, food, and material items. A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is available upon request.



WHEN AND WHERE? The testing is done annually in late summer or early fall in areas of the District identified with high infiltration. Owners will be notified by mail and with door hangers at least one week prior to testing their area. Owners do not need to be home during testing and can continue using facilities as normal.

While testing, smoke may be seen around manhole covers, storm drains, roof vents and areas of defects. Smoke will not enter your home or business if all the plumbing is installed properly and in good repair. (However, water can evaporate from unused plumbing fixtures. So, prior to any testing, pour water down all drains to fill the traps especially if you have a bathroom or plumbing fixture that is seldom used.)

If smoke does enter the building, it will clear in a few minutes with proper ventilation. Open up doors and windows to ventilate the premises and clear the smoke.

Smoke entering a building indicates that odor from the sewer system may also be entering, which can be unpleasant. We advise you to locate, identify, and correct the source of any smoke entering the building as soon as possible.

Possible causes for smoke entering the building are:

- Defective, inadequate or improperly installed vents, pipes, joints and seals of the building's sewer system.
- Dry, defective, improperly installed, or missing traps under sinks, tubs, showers, floor drains, etc.

Defects causing smoke outside buildings are more typical. Common defects include:

- Sewer lateral system cracks, holes or loose joints.
- Missing or unapproved cleanout caps.
- Roof downspouts and area drains cross-connected to the sanitary system.

Defects located by smoke testing are identified, documented and photographed by the smoke testing personnel. Owners are then notified by mail with information on defects, if any, they are responsible to correct and what steps to take.

For more information on smoke testing please feel free to call our office at (510) 524-4667 so we can answer any questions you may have and provide you assistance.