Village of Russia

Public Notice

**Frequently asked Questions and answers about smoke testing**

1. **What is the purpose of smoke testing?**

A wastewater system or sanitary sewer system is designed to transport wastewater to our treatment facility. In dry weather this is not a problem. However in wet weather, the rain water, or snow melt may enter the sanitary system, resulting in an increased volume of flow the system wasn’t designed to handle.

This situation is called inflow. This can cause sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). Smoke testing is one of the best ways to locate problems in the main sewer line and the laterals that connect to your residence.

1. **What is smoke testing?**

Smoke testing is the process of injecting artificially produced smoke into a blocked off pipeline segment to see where the smoke emerges. If the sewer is in good condition then the forced smoke will emerge from manhole lids along the line and house vents on the roof. If the line has defects, the smoke will find the break and try to escape through the break. It is not unusual to see plumes of smoke issuing up from peculiar places, such as cracks in the street, or in the yards during smoke testing.

A two to four person crew from the Village will conduct the tests. Each crew member will walk around and look for problems while the smoke is being injected into the sewer. They will document all problems and mark the location for the repair.

1. **Is the smoke harmful or toxic?**

The smoke the Village of Russia uses to test the sewers is Superior Smoke and it is commonly used in the industry. The smoke is not harmful to you, your pets or your plants. It will not harm or stain clothes, drapes or furniture. It is not flammable and does not create a fire hazard.

While to smoke is not considered harmful, it is recommended to avoid prolonged periods of exposure. If smoke appears from a drain inside your residence, open windows and ventilate well to dissipate the smoke.

1. **Will I have smoke entering my house?**

Probably not however it is a possibility. The smoke could enter into your house by a dry trap, a washing machine drain that is not trapped, or by an appliance that is not installed correctly.

**If smoke enters your house so can harmful sewer gases.**

1. **What should I do if I have smoke in my house?**

First of all **Do Not Panic,** however you will want to open doors and windows and allow ventilation, try to note the location of the smoke. The smoke will clear within a few minutes. Exit the building and notify the smoke testing crew in the area.

The smoke is not harmful, but we do ask you to evacuate the building as a precautionary measure is case the smoke is due to a real fire rather than the smoke testing. This is also a good idea since other sewer gases could be present in your home.

The smoke from the testing may also set off your smoke detectors, if it does open windows and doors. If you are unsure of where the smoke is coming from call 911 and evacuate your house.

1. **I can see smoke in my front yard or coming out my neighbors roof vents?**

If you see smoke coming from your yard that may indicate a break in your lateral or in the main sewer line. A Village of Russia crew member will mark the area for repair.

Where the smoke is exiting the ground does not mean that is where the break is, the smoke can travel underground until is find the easiest way to exit.

If the smoke is coming from your neighbors roof vents, that is a good thing that means all is working properly.

1. **Is there anything I need to do prior to the starting of the smoke testing?**

During smoke testing the crews force smoke into the sanitary sewer system which can enter into the home from dry traps. A dry trap may be where there is not much water being used.

1. **Do I have to be home while my area of town is being smoke tested?**

No, at no time will the Village crew need to make access to your house. If there is smoke present and you would like for a crew member to help locate the problem, that can be arranged.

1. **I am not going to be home, however I have pets what should I do with them.**

The smoke is not harmful to pets, but you can place your pet somewhere where there is no plumbing. You can also crack your windows for good ventilation. If your plumbing is properly connected and all the drain traps are sealed there shouldn’t be any problem.

**Any questions not answered here, you can call Mark at the Village Office at 937-526-4436.**

IMPORTANT! If there is any individual in your home or business that has respiratory problems and is immobile, please notify us at 937-526-4436 prior to the testing date.