



CONTACT:

Todd Shoemaker, Environmental Engineer
(563) 690-6034

tshoemak@cityofdubuque.org

www.cityofdubuque.org/i&i

NEWS RELEASE

September 19, 2011 – For Immediate Release

Where There's Smoke, There's Inflow and Infiltration

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The City's Engineering Department will conduct another round of targeted smoke testing of the sanitary sewer system as part of the City's Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Reduction Program to reduce the amount of rainwater and groundwater that enters the sanitary sewer system.

Smoke testing of the sanitary sewer system will be conducted between Monday, Sept. 26, and Friday, Oct. 7, in the area bounded approximately by Nevada Street to the west, 16th Street to the north, Locust Street to the east, and Langworthy/Mazzuchelli/1st Streets to the south. Approximately 12 miles of sanitary sewer pipe will be tested. WHKS & Co., an East Dubuque engineering firm, will be assisting the City with the smoke testing. An inspection crew will travel throughout the neighborhood, lifting manhole lids, setting out testing equipment, and entering yards to observe and record the smoke testing.

Smoke testing consists of introducing non-toxic smoke into sanitary sewer pipe sections under moderate pressure. Engineering personnel will document where the smoke is emitted and prioritize needed repairs. Since the smoke will be placed into the sewer system that is connected to homes, residents are encouraged to pour tap water into their floor drains and sinks. This small amount of water creates a seal that keeps the smoke out of the homes. Residents do not need to be present during smoke testing.

Dry traps, drains without traps, and other plumbing defects will allow the smoke to enter the dwelling connected to the sewer line that is being tested. The smoke is non-toxic, leaves no residue, and creates no fire hazard. If a resident is present and smoke enters the house or building, please report all locations to the work crews (563-582-5481) and open a window to allow the smoke to dissipate. It may also be desirable to contact a plumber if the smoke enters the house in a manner other than a dry drain trap.

The goal of Dubuque's I&I reduction program is to reduce the amount of rainwater and groundwater that enters the sanitary sewer system during wet weather. Allowing these clean water connections causes sanitary sewer back-ups into basements, overflows into creeks and wetlands, and increased operating costs to process the water at the Dubuque Water Pollution Control Plant. Removing this clean water will reduce collection and treatment costs; allow the sanitary sewer system to work more effectively; allow the City to optimize the performance of the existing pipe system and treatment; and minimize sanitary sewer backups into basements.

For additional information, call the City of Dubuque I&I Information line at 563-690-6113 or visit www.cityofdubuque.org/i&i.

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