

Smoke and Dye Testing of Sewer Lines in Bluffton, Indiana

Bluffton has two types of sewers:

- Storm sewers collect rainwater and groundwater; and
- Sanitary Sewers collect waste from your household industrial and household drains
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Water and waste in sanitary sewers must be properly treated and waste removed. The water in storm sewers can be carried directly to the Wabash River without treatment.

It is important that the contents of these sewers not be mixed together. When waste enters the storm sewer, it goes directly to the river and can cause harm to the environment. When rainwater and groundwater enter the sanitary sewer, they overburden our Wastewater Treatment Facility and require costly and unnecessary treatment.

In an effort to make certain that the right water is going into the correct sewer, the Bluffton Wastewater Department is performing two tests: One is a test in which dye is put into your line and is traced to find the sewer line which receives it. The other is a test whereby “smoke” (actually a chemical that looks like smoke) is forced thru the city’s line to trace it back to its source. It is important to remember:

1. Both of the tests may not be performed at the same time.
2. It will be necessary for a Bluffton Utilities employee to enter your home so that the dye can be placed in a toilet, drain, or basement sump. Every Bluffton Wastewater employee carries a City Photo ID.
3. Before the smoke testing, you may want to put about five gallons of water into any floor drains you have in your home. This should prevent the smoke from entering your home through any dried up traps. Should any smoke enter your home, **DO NOT BECOME ALARMED AND DO NOT CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.** The “smoke” is nontoxic.
4. It may also be necessary for some of our employees to be on your property while checking the sewers at your place of residence. Feel free to ask us any questions you may have. Your cooperation during these tests is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions please call Larry Hartman at 824-5430 or leave a message and we will return your call. Wastewater office hours are 7:30-11:30am and 12:30-4:30pm weekdays.

Thank you for your help!