



Public Education and Outreach

Sanitary Sewer Overflows: Infiltration/Inflow, "Think Before You Flush", Water Conservation

Dear Members of the Village of Woodbury Community,

On March 3, 2022, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the Village of Woodbury an Order on Compliance for Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs) that have occurred at a few locations within the Village's sanitary sewer collection system.

Over the course of the last five years, there were eleven (11) SSO events that reached Woodbury Creek and its tributaries. These events are in violation of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The Village is actively engaged with the EPA and DEC to mitigate overflow events. However, there are actions each member of our community can take to help with this effort. We hope this notice provides you with information so that you can help protect your environment and community.

Why does the Village have SSOs?

SSOs happen when untreated raw sewage is released into the environment. They can occur when sewer lines clog or break, heavy rainfall overloads the sewer system, or due to equipment malfunction and power outages. The eleven (11) SSOs referenced above were reported during heavy rainfall and intense storm events. During these events, the volume of raw sewage plus stormwater exceeded the Village's collection system capacity at a few locations. These reoccurring issues during storm events indicate that the Village's sanitary sewer system is being inundated with stormwater through infiltration and inflow (I/I).

What is Infiltration and Inflow?

Infiltration occurs through cracks in pipes and infrastructure. Inflow can occur through manhole lids, or through house connections that convey rain and groundwater from illegal sump pump connections, foundation drains and rain leaders.

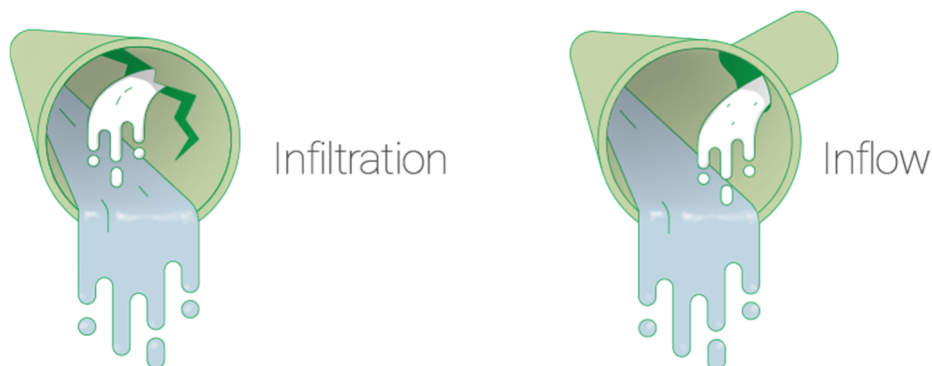


Photo Source: <https://inbound.envirosight.com/inflow-and-infiltration>

What can I do about Infiltration and Inflow?

The Village is addressing infiltration found in the collection system sewers. *However, we need your help with Inflow!* If your home has an illegal connection contributing inflow, please disconnect it immediately and provide a means to discharge your stormwater to the ground. If you observe poor road drainage around a sewer manhole, please report it to the Sewer Department so we can check that the lid is watertight.



Is there anything else I can do to help alleviate this ongoing issue?

Yes! Since SSOs occur due to demands on the sanitary sewer system capacity during rain events, please **CONSERVE WATER** and **“THINK BEFORE YOU FLUSH”!**

CONSERVE WATER DURING RAIN EVENTS – Since the Village’s SSOs occur during rain events, you can do your part to alleviate high flow in the system by using less water. Water sent down drains and from toilets, showers, and dishwashers enters the sewer system.

Sewage + Rainwater = Overflows – Help us to stop the Overflows!



Photo Source: <https://waterandhealth.org/safe-drinking-water/you-too-can-embrace-water-conservation-and-it-really-works/>

“THINK BEFORE YOU FLUSH” – Not just in our community, but throughout America, there is an ongoing crisis occurring in municipal wastewater systems due to wipes, feminine sanitary products, tissues (YES - even tissues), paper towels, and dental floss being flushed down toilets. Unlike toilet paper, these products do not easily dissolve or breakdown. Wipes with packaging that claim to be “flushable” – they aren’t! When these materials reach sewage pump stations (if they don’t settle out and clog your sewers) they clog pumps which prevents wastewater from being conveyed, and – you guessed it – SSOs! These issues require maintenance and money to fix and repair (aka your tax dollars)! Please **DO NOT** flush anything except for the three “Ps” – Pee, Poop, and toilet Paper!

Good



Bad

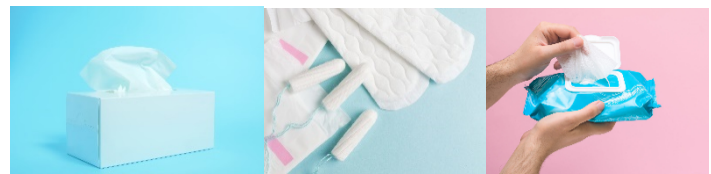


Photo Source: <https://flush3p.org/education/>

Remember this is your environment and your community, and if it seems like these issues are not your problem, remember your taxpayer dollars go towards the mitigation efforts.

For more information, the following links provide recommendations by the State and Federal Government for water conservation and flushing etiquette and why you should do your part to participate:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5009.html>

<https://www.epa.gov/greeningepa/water-conservation-epa>

https://www3.epa.gov/region1/eco/drinkwater/water_conservation_residents.html

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-encourages-americans-only-flush-toilet-paper>

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/NYSDEC/bulletins/28599ee>