

## **Guidance Document Prevention of Sanitary Sewer Overflows Commercial Properties**

West Jackson County Utility District wishes to educate all commercial property owners of their responsibilities regarding their privately-owned sewer system. Sewer services and pumping stations serving commercial properties are owned, operated and maintained by the commercial property.

West Jackson County Utility District (WJCUD) does not own, operate, maintain or repair commercially-owned private sewer facilities unless a valid maintenance agreement is in effect or deemed by MDEQ as a public health hazard.

If you own a building, then you also own the building sewer system that connects your building's plumbing to the public sewer. The owner shall operate and maintain the private sewage disposal facilities in a sanitary manner at all times. Your responsibility includes keeping your building sewer system clean, clear, and in good repair.

Here are a few things to keep in mind that will help you maintain your privately owned sewer system:

**Have Your Building Sewer Inspected Quarterly by a Professional Plumber** - Make maintenance and cleaning of your sewer system a priority.

**Prevent Grease Buildup** - Check your grease interceptors, if you have them, to see if any build up or blockage has occurred. If you do not have a grease trap installed in your sewer system do not pour fat, oil, or grease down your drains. As these items cool, they can create build up and clogs in your sewer lines. Fats, oil and grease regulations are addressed in the Sewer Use Ordinance located on our website at [www.wjcu.com](http://www.wjcu.com)

**Landscape with Care** - When you plant trees or shrubs on your property you should consider the location of your sewer system. Do not plant above or near the building sewer system or lines. Roots that are seeking water can enter the building sewer and cause clogs, or possibly break the sewer pipe. If roots enter the sewer pipes, you will need a professional plumber to cut away the roots and clear the blockage. This process will need to be repeated annually as the roots grow back quickly.

**Flush Responsibly** - Don't flush non-dissolvable materials in your toilet. Items such as baby wipes, feminine products, etc., can get caught in the sewer system and restrict or block the flow of wastewater through your system. Dispose of these items in the trash. Some brands of wipes say they are safe to flush, but we do not recommend it.

Properly designed, operated, and maintained sanitary sewer systems are meant to collect and transport all of the sewage that flows into them to a publicly owned treatment works facility (POTW). Occasionally unintentional discharges of raw sewage from privately owned sanitary sewer systems can occur. These types of discharges are called sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). SSOs have a variety of causes, including but not limited to blockages, line breaks, sewer defects that allow storm water and groundwater to overload the system, lapses in sewer system operation and maintenance, power failures, inadequate sewer design and vandalism. The untreated sewage from these overflows can contaminate our surface and ground waters, causing serious water quality problems, and threaten environmental and public health.

Any person found to be in violation of any WJCUD ordinance shall be served by the District with written notice and given the time limit the violation must be corrected by in order to avoid a non-compliance fee or legal action. The notice will state the nature of the violation along with the ordinance addressing it. A written plan should be submitted to the District within 14 days of the date of the notice detailing the owner's plan for permanent correction of the deficiency. All ordinances may be viewed at [www.wjcu.com](http://www.wjcu.com). Any property found to have a sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) will have their water service terminated until the sewer overflow has been resolved. The SSO should be reported by the property owner to the MS. Department of Environmental Quality (MS DEQ) at (888) 786-0661.

In addition, State (i.e. MS DEQ) and local fines (i.e. Jackson County Utility Authority) assessed upon WJCUD for the violation of a commercial property's SSO shall also be assessed against the commercial property owner by WJCUD.