



OUR FUTURE IN EVERY DRÖP

## **SMOKE TESTING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- 1. Why does the City perform smoke tests?**
  - A. The City performs smoke tests to determine if there are any illegal connections to, or defects in, the sanitary sewer system. A defect could allow storm water into the sanitary sewer system, raising the cost of wastewater treatment.
- 2. How often does the City perform smoke tests in my neighborhood?**
  - A. The City plans on smoke testing every neighborhood every 5 to 10 years.
- 3. I or a family member has a respiratory problem. What should I do during a smoke test?**
  - A. Very rarely does smoke enter a home, but it would be best if you could sit outside for the duration of the smoke test which is approximately 5 minutes. If you cannot sit outside, open the windows of your home and shut your bathroom doors. Also, let the City smoke test crew member who knocks on your door know you have a respiratory condition.
- 4. I work during the day and have inside animals. What do I do during a smoke test?**
  - A. Very rarely does smoke enter a home, but if you do have to leave your animals inside make sure you leave windows open. On the rare occasion when smoke does enter the home, it is usually a defect in the bathroom, so do not lock animals in the bathroom. Shut bathroom doors and leave the bathroom window open.
- 5. Is smoke harmful to my animals?**
  - A. In most cases, no. But, if your animal has a respiratory condition, the smoke could irritate it.
- 6. Is smoke harmful to my plants?**
  - A. No, the smoke is not harmful to indoor or outdoor plants.
- 7. Why would smoke enter my resident or business?**
  - A. A plumbing defect or unused sinks, showers or drains is how smoke would enter a home or business. The most frequent cause of smoke in a residence or business is a bad wax ring on the toilet. Unused sinks, showers or drains should have water placed in them to fill up the p-traps. A p-trap is a standard plumbing fitting used on all sinks, showers or drains so sewer gases and sewer odor won't enter your home.
- 8. Should I be concerned if smoke enters my home or business?**
  - A. Yes, this means that sewer gases or odors can also enter your home or business.



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- 9. What should I do if smoke enters my home or business?**
- A. Open your windows and call a professional plumber.
- 10. How long does the smoke test last?**
- A. Approximately 5-10 minutes.
- 11. When and how will I be notified of the time of the smoke test for my home or business?**
- A. A City smoke test crew member will knock on your door just prior to the smoke test. The crew has to notify a large area so "just prior" could be 20 minutes or 5 minutes.
- 12. I have a sump pump connected to my sewer lateral under the house. Will that be affected during the smoke test?**
- A. Yes, sump pumps are illegal connections to the sanitary sewer system. If you have a sump pump connected to the sanitary sewer system, you should disconnect it. If your sewer lateral becomes fully or partially plugged and your sump pump turns on, the water could be pumped into your home through a shower or tub causing tremendous damage.

**For more information, visit [srcity.org/1045](http://srcity.org/1045) or call 707-543-4200.**