

May 16, 2018

Re: Inflow/Infiltration (I&I) Reduction Program  
Sanitary Sewer Smoke Testing

Dear Resident:

The City of Biloxi Engineering Department, in conjunction with the Public Works Department, is planning to perform sanitary sewer smoke testing in your area within the next two weeks. The objective of the testing is to remove sources of rainwater from the sanitary sewer system by locating breaks and defects in the sewer lines. This helps not only protect the environment by reducing the number sewer overflows; but also keeps wastewater treatment costs down and sanitary sewer rates low.

The smoke used for smoke testing is non-toxic and non-hazardous and is manufactured specifically for this purpose. It leaves no residue or stains, and has no effect on plants or animals. The smoke should not enter your building, but if it does, it will have a distinct odor and should only last a few minutes with proper ventilation. The City of Biloxi Fire Department will be made aware of the smoke testing project areas and schedule. There will be door hangers given to residents at least 24 hours in advance of the testing actually being performed.

Smoke testing will identify sewer system defects on both public and private property that will need to be corrected in a timely manner. If smoke should enter your home or business, please notify a one of the smoke testing field crews immediately, so it can be properly documented. The City will correct defects found on public property, and property owners will be sent notices for the defects found on private property.

Please review the back of this notice for tips and frequently asked questions regarding smoke testing. We appreciate your patience and understanding and will make every effort to minimize any inconveniences or disruptions. If you have any further questions or concerns, please call the Engineering Department at 228-435-6269.

Sincerely,



Christy LeBatard, P.E.  
City Engineer

# **Inflow/Infiltration (I&I) Reduction Program**

## **Smoke Testing**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*What exactly is a smoke test?* A smoke test consists of using a high capacity blower to test each sewer line. Smoke blowers are placed on manholes and smoke is blown through the sewer system. Any location where smoke is identified during the test, except plumbing vent stacks is a potential I&I source for rain water to enter the sewer system. These locations will be documented so that repairs can be made.

*What is the benefit of performing a smoke test?* Smoke testing is a technique used to identify sections of sewer system that may be receiving excessive inflow during heavy rainfall through openings in the sewer pipes. Those openings could be breaks in the pipes, roof drains, illegal storm drain connections, or missing clean out caps. The benefit to finding and correcting these openings is that it will reduce the number of sanitary sewer overflows by reducing the volume of rainfall that enters the sanitary sewer system. Reducing overflows not only helps the environment but also eliminates potential public health concerns. Smoke testing also helps to keep wastewater treatment costs down because when rainwater enters the sewer system it goes to the treatment plant to be treated. If we reduce the volume of sewer that goes to the treatment plant, we also reduce costs, which in turn helps the City keep sewer user rates down.

*How will residents know when Smoke testing will be performed?* Residents will receive letters just like this one when smoke testing is planned. The day before the actual test will be done, door hangers will be placed on each residence that may be impacted.

*Is the smoke that is used hazardous?* The smoke is non-toxic and non-hazardous and is manufactured specifically for this purpose. It does not create a fire hazard. The City of Biloxi Fire Department is made aware of times and locations smoke testing is going to be performed.

*Do residents or businesses have to do anything to prepare their homes for Smoke Testing?*

- Make sure all drain traps and plumbing fixtures have water in them by running the faucet for 30-60 seconds or filling the drain with approximately 3 cups of water. Do this now, as it only needs to be done once before testing begins.
- You do not need to be home during the smoke testing field work.
- Smoke should not enter your home, but if it does it could be an indication of a defect in your plumbing system. Corrections of such defects on private property are the responsibility of the property owner and a licensed plumber should be consulted to ensure the proper connections are made.
- If smoke does enter your home or building, please notify a member of smoke testing field crew who is conducting the test so that the issue may be documented.

*What happens after the smoke testing has been completed?* The City of Biloxi will notify property owners who need to make corrections with a letter explaining the nature of the defect found, ways to correct it. Most corrections can be easy fixes such as disconnecting a downspout from the ground and letter the water flow above ground away from the house. The City of Biloxi will also document defects found on public property and make preparations to make those repairs.