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## Mission Statement

H2GO is committed to assuring a quality of life for our valued customers by providing the highest levels of water and sanitary sewer services, from Source to Stream, in a safe and efficient manner.

As professional service providers, H2GO in cooperation with its community partners will comprehensively plan, develop, maintain and operate the District's utility systems in a customer service oriented and cost-effective manner.



## Sanitary Sewer Smoke Testing

Smoke testing is used as a method to find leaks before they become a larger problem in the sanitary sewer collection system. Typically, direct sources of surface water or groundwater can enter a collection system during rainfall events – including catch basins, area drains, house roof downspouts, sump pump discharge and/or foundation drains connected to the sanitary system.

Smoke testing involves pushing a simulated, non-toxic smoke through the community's collection system, then observing and documenting where the smoke exits. Field technicians set up a blower over an open and exposed manhole and pump the non-toxic smoke through the sewer line. The exiting smoke can indicate the location of a broken sewer pipe, manholes, catch basins, or where roof or foundation drains are connected to the sewer system.

Smoke testing is the most efficient and cost-effective way to accurately identify where water is entering the community's collection system.

#### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

##### ***Q: Is the smoke harmful?***

A: No, the "smoke" is not actually smoke. Rather, it is a mist containing a large percentage of atmospheric moisture that is highly visible at lower concentrations. It is not harmful to your health and will not leave a stain. In fact, it will disappear relatively quickly without leaving an odor. Since any vapor can be an irritant, direct contact with the "smoke" may cause minor respiratory irritation in some people. Residents with respiratory problems like chronic asthma should avoid direct inhalation of the "smoke".

##### ***Q: Will smoke enter my home?***

A: The "smoke" should not enter your home, assuming your home's plumbing system is installed and functioning as it should and provided "traps" are filled with water. Drains that are used frequently should be okay, as their traps are normal full. If you are not sure, simply run water down the drain for a minute to ensure that the trap is not dry. It is important to locate dry traps as they could allow sewer gases to enter the home.

##### ***Q: I am a pet owner and will not be home during the testing. Should I be worried about my pets?***

A: The "smoke" is not harmful to pets. As long as your house is well ventilated and windows are left open, any smoke that may enter the home should dissipate quickly.

##### ***Q: What does it mean if smoke gets in my home?***

A: If "smoke" enters your home during the test, it may indicate there are deficiencies in the plumbing that is allowing potentially dangerous sewer gas to enter. Since plumbing fixtures in your home or business are connected to the sanitary sewer system, there is the potential for the smoke to enter if the drains are not connected properly. This happens particularly under the following circumstances: The vents connected to your building's sewer pipes are inadequate, defective or improperly installed; The traps under sinks, tubs, basins, showers and other drains are dry, defective or improperly installed; The pipes, connections or seals in the wastewater drain system in and/or under your building are damaged, defective, have plugs missing or are improperly installed

##### ***Q: How is a plumbing "trap" supposed to work?***

A: The "gooseneck" or "snake" section of your drain pipe is the "trap." The trap allows water to fill that part of the pipe completely, effectively trapping the gas in the sewer portion of the pipe. The vent on your system— the portion of pipe protruding from the roof of the building— prevents the gas from becoming pressurized and allows it to make its way outside of the structure. These two systems function together to keep potentially harmful sewer gases from entering your structure. If there is no water in the trap, the trap is not functioning properly. We recommend dumping water into lesser used drains and fixtures prior to testing.

##### ***Q: Will first responders be on standby in case of an emergency?***

A: Yes, crews inform the local fire department and EMS before smoke testing occurs.