Guide for Property Owners and Plumbers

What is SD1’s Backup Assistance Program?

SD1’s Backup Assistance Program is designed to provide financial relief to property owners dealing with repeated wet-weather sewer backups in their homes or businesses. It provides up to $10,000 in assistance per approved property for installing a “backup solution” – a mechanical device that can prevent wet-weather backups. A typical solution costs less than $5,000. Note: SD1 may require a second estimate if the first is over $5,000.

Who is eligible to participate in the Backup Assistance Program?

You may be eligible to participate if you meet all of the following conditions:

• The property is located in SD1’s service area.
• Your private sewer lateral and indoor plumbing are in proper working condition and you have no illegal connections.
• Your SD1 accounts are up-to-date.
• Your property has experienced a wet-weather backup.

How do I participate in SD1’s Backup Assistance Program?

1. Report the backup. If you experience a sewer backup, call SD1 as soon as possible at 859-578-7450 (choose option 1) to report the issue. SD1 will send an employee to investigate. If SD1 cannot determine the cause, you may be required to hire a plumber to investigate further.

2. Review, sign and submit a Backup Assistance Agreement. If SD1 confirms you are eligible for assistance, you will receive a packet, including a Backup Assistance Agreement. Be sure to include the property address on your Agreement and send it to SD1. SD1 will send a formal letter of acceptance into the program.

3. Authorize installation work to begin. Once you receive an acceptance letter, you are responsible for overseeing the installation of the backup solution. Your plumber may require you to provide a copy of your program acceptance letter before beginning work. Your plumber is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and inspections.

4. Sign and submit an Application for Financial Assistance. Once you are satisfied with your plumber’s work and installation is complete, fill out the Application for Financial Assistance and sign the Release of Claims. Return the Application for Financial Assistance, Release of Claims, Plumber’s Inspection Form and an itemized final invoice from your qualified plumber to SD1.

SD1 will contact you to schedule an inspection of the installed backup solution before releasing financial assistance. Finally, SD1 will send a check to the owner or alternate payee, as designated by the owner.

Questions?

If you have questions about SD1’s Backup Assistance Program, please call SD1 at 859-578-7450 and ask for the Backup Assistance Program coordinator.
Backup Assistance Program

How do I know if I’ve hired a “qualified plumber”? 
You must hire a “qualified plumber” to recommend and install a backup solution. SD1 considers a plumber “qualified” if he or she is licensed by the state of Kentucky.

What counts as a “qualified backup”? 
A sewer backup can qualify for SD1’s Backup Assistance Program if it is caused by wet weather and other issues are not the primary cause of the problem. If your private lateral is damaged, you have illegal connections or your property’s plumbing is otherwise not working properly, your sewer backup may not qualify for the program.

What qualifies as an eligible expense? 
Eligible expenses include any labor or materials directly related to installing a backflow solution, including the device itself and the digging required to install it. Ineligible expenses include work to upgrade internal plumbing or electricity to current standards, repair defective private laterals or remove illegal connections.

What is a backup solution? 
A backup solution is a mechanical device that isolates a home or business from the public sewer pipe and the water that flows through it. Backflow valves, sewage ejector pumps and grinder pumps are backup solutions you may wish to consider installing if your property experiences backups related to wet weather.

Remember, not all backups are caused solely by wet weather. Faulty indoor plumbing or a damaged private lateral can cause or contribute to backups. If this is the case in your situation, a backup solution alone may not eliminate backups in your home or business. Hire a qualified plumber to help you assess your property and recommend a comprehensive backup solution.

What types of backup solutions can I choose from? 
There are two types of backup solutions that most residential or small business properties choose: backflow valves and sewage ejector pumps. Each type has unique benefits as well as challenges. See the following pages for detailed explanations of these two backup solutions.

What else should I consider when choosing a backup solution? 
Carefully consider each backup solution with the help of a qualified plumber. To ensure you get the best advice at the best price, seek out evaluations and quotes from multiple qualified plumbers before you choose a backup solution. Be sure to also consider the following factors when choosing a backup solution:

• Whether your plumbing and electrical systems are up-to-date or will need upgraded.

• The ease and expense of addressing future maintenance needs.

• Whether you have storm water connections that will need rerouted.

• The cost-benefit of installing and maintaining each backup solution. Are the backups on your property severe and frequent enough to justify the cost of a more costly pump backup solution?
Backflow Valve

Backflow valves only permit water to flow in one direction — from a home or business to the public sewer. This device is installed along a private sanitary sewer lateral and, ideally, outside near the property line.

**PROS**

- No power requirements.
- Lower cost to buy and install.
- Lower cost to operate and maintain.
- If installed indoors, does not require installation of a plumbing vent. Many older homes do not have an existing plumbing vent.

**CONS**

- Any storm water connections to your plumbing or sewer lateral must be removed.
- You may need to limit use of your indoor plumbing during a rain event. An engaged backflow valve will stop wastewater from flowing in either direction.

The flapper valve remains closed when excessive rain water backs up into the private lateral from the public sewer pipe. Once the rain water flow decreases, the flapper valve can reopen to allow private sewage flow to exit the lateral.
Sewage ejector pump

Sewage ejector pumps lift sewage up and out of a property before discharging it back into the sanitary sewer lateral. All flow from the lowest levels of the home would be routed into the lateral through the pump. The pump could be installed inside or outside the home. Install an alarm on the pump to ensure you are notified if the pump fails.

**PROS**
- ✔ Can handle both storm water and wastewater.
- ✔ Can use indoor plumbing during a rain event.

**CONS**
- ✗ Will not work during power outages.
- ✗ Requires a dedicated electrical circuit.
- ✗ May require an air vent, which many older homes do not already have.
- ✗ Higher operating (electricity) and maintenance (pump replacement) costs.
- ✗ Can be a source of odors.
- ✗ Toys, rags, wipes and other hygiene products can clog the pumps. Customers should never flush these items as they can damage the public sewer system.