



CITY OF NEW YORK  DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NEWS...

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Release Date:

Immediate

SMOKE TESTING RELEASE

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will be smoke testing two sections of city sewer in the Coney Island/Sheepshead Bay area of Brooklyn for a 10-day period beginning August 20, 1984. The smoke tests will help to pinpoint leaking joints, damaged sewer pipes, and other locations where rain water may be seeping into sanitary sewer lines.

In all, 35,000 feet of sewer pipe will be smoke tested in two areas. One area is bounded by Avenue X on the north, Batchelder Street on the east, Voorhies Street on the south, and East 28th Street on the west. The other area is bounded by Avenue U on the north, Bragg Street on the east, Avenue Y on the south, and East 19th Street on the west. Previous studies by DEP have shown that both these areas are experiencing heavy inflows of rain-water to the sanitary sewer systems.

The tests are done by forcing smoke into the sewers with a blower and recording the locations at which the smoke escapes. The smoke is non-hazardous, non-staining, non-combustible, and does not leave a residue. During the tests, smoke will escape from catchbasins at street level and from plumbing vent stacks located on building roofs. The traps in household plumbing should prevent the smoke from entering people's houses. To assure that there is a water seal in every trap before the test, residents should pour water into basement floor drains and run the water for a short time in any sink, shower, or other fixture that has not been recently used. During the tests, the plumbing can be used as normal.

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Some of the short range results expected from the testing will be to provide recommendations for sewer backup relief and a better functioning sewer system. Long range results will be noticed in improved water quality in the neighboring waters.

FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

Under Public Law 92-500 and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1974, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires that after July 1, 1973 all applicants for treatment works grants must demonstrate that an existing sewer system discharging into treatment works is not subject to excessive Infiltration/Inflow. A three step program to satisfy the requirements of this public law consists of an Infiltration/Inflow (I/I) Analysis, a Sewer System Evaluation Survey and a Sewer Rehabilitation Program.

The City of New York, Department of Environmental Protection initiated the upgrading/expansion of the Coney Island Treatment Plant in the late 1970's. For the improvement program costs to be eligible for federal finding, the City performed the first step in I/I Process. The Bureau of Sewers completed an I/I Study in March 1979 which demonstrated that various areas within the Coney Island service area contribute potentially excessive I/I. This report recommended that a Phase II Sewer System Evaluation Survey (SSES) be performed to locate those sources that are contributing excess flow. Once the location of the sources are found and the quantity of excess flow determined, a cost-effectiveness analysis is performed to see if it is appropriate to rehabilitate these sources or to treat the excess flow. Smoke testing is a procedure employed as part of the SSES to locate sources.

PURPOSE FOR SMOKE TESTING

The City of New York, Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP), Bureau of Water Pollution Control is presently conducting a study to determine the condition of existing sewers which convey sewage to the Coney Island Treatment Plant. As part of the study, a program known as "Smoke Testing" will be employed to locate sources which are contributing additional rainfall-related flows (inflow) to the sanitary sewers.

Smoke testing is a common procedure employed by municipalities to identify sources of inflow. The method is used to detect inflow sources such as roof leaders, cellar, yard, area, and foundation drains, abandoned building sewers, and storm sewer cross connections. Smoke testing is also used to detect structural damages and leaking joints in sewer pipes and manholes.

While this is the first time that this program is to be performed in New York City, it is anticipated that other areas of the City will be smoke tested when the sewer system in those sections are to be evaluated. Smoke testing of the

sanitary sewer system is to be performed within two small areas of The Coney Island Drainage Areas both located between Flatlands, Sheepshead Bay and Gerritsen. First area (G-2) is bounded by Avenue X on the north, Batchelder Street on the east, Voornies Avenue on the south and E. 28th Street on the west; the second area (G-12) is bounded by Avenue U on the north, Bragg Street on the east, Avenue Y on the south and E. 19th Street on the west (see attached maps).

SMOKE TESTING PROCEDURE

1. Maps showing the location of the sewer lines and manholes to be smoke tested within the area are prepared.
2. Summer is considered the best period to perform smoke testing since groundwater levels are normally low. Rainy and windy days are to be avoided.
3. Community Boards and both the Police and Fire Departments are to be kept advised on a daily basis as to the nature and time of the tests.
4. Residents are to be notified as to the nature and time of the tests.
5. Two sections of sewer are tested simultaneously with equipment set on the intermediate manhole of the sewer sections being smoke tested.
6. A smoke generating device is activated and the smoke is forced through the sewer system with a blower. The area serviced by the sewer sections is thoroughly examined during the test and all problems are recorded.
7. Photographs are taken of smoke coming out of the ground, storm sewers, catch basins, roof drains, etc... (See Exhibit #1 - "EXAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHS").

SMOKE TESTING NOTIFICATION

Smoke testing notices (Exhibit #2) will be slid under the front door of every residence (if possible), posted in lobbies of apartment houses and taped to light or telephone poles in the project areas. Both Police and Fire Departments will be informed of program activities.

DURATION OF SMOKE TESTING

It is estimated that 35,000 linear feet of sewer will be smoke tested. Testing program will be conducted for a period of approximately 10 days. Therefore, testing will commence on or around _____ 1984 and be completed by _____.

Exhibit #2

SMOKE TESTING NOTICE

Dear Resident:

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Water Quality Unit will be smoke testing the sanitary sewers in your area beginning in the next several days and continuing through the week. The purpose of this test is to find where rain water is getting into the sanitary sewer.

This test is performed by blowing smoke through the sewer lines. Under normal conditions smoke can be seen coming from the plumbing vents located on roofs in the area for approximately 10 minutes. Traps in the house plumbing should prevent smoke from entering the house. Pour water into basement floor drains to make sure that these traps have a water seal. If you have a sink or shower that has not been used recently, please turn it on for a short period prior to the testing day.

Please do not be alarmed by this test. The smoke used is non-hazardous, non-staining, non-combustible and will not leave a residue.

Every effort will be made to keep any inconvenience to you at a minimum.

If you have any questions, please call ~~Mr. Robert Gaffoglio~~ of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Water Quality Unit at 566-3730 or ~~Ms. Denise Novin~~ of The New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Public Participation Office at 566-5271.

Exhibit #2

NOTICE

Smoke testing of the sewer system serving your home or building will be conducted on: _____, or shortly thereafter.

Normally, the smoke will not enter the occupied portion of a building. However, if you observe any smoke in your home or building, notify the survey crew working in the street.

THE SMOKE IS NON-HAZARDOUS AND WILL NOT LEAVE A RESIDUE.

If you have a sink or shower that has not been used recently, please turn it on for a short period prior to the testing day.

If you have any questions - call

~~Mr. Robert Gaffoglio~~ or
New York City - Department
of Environmental Protection
Water Quality Unit
566-3730

~~Ms. Denise Novin~~
New York City - Department
Of Environmental Protection
Public Participation
Office - 566-5271

Thank you for your cooperation.

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During the actual test procedure, two sections of sewer are tested simultaneously with equipment set on the intermediate manhole of the sewer sections being smoke tested. A smoke generating device is activated and the "non-hazardous" smoke is forced through the sewer system by a blower. The area serviced by the sewer section is thoroughly examined during the test and the location of problems are recorded.

Notices informing residents that smoke testing will take place will be slid under the front door of every residence (if possible), posted in lobbies of apartment houses and taped to light or telephone poles in the project areas.

In the event that a resident is not informed, and thus, sees smoke appearing in and around his or her home they most probably will call "911" or will notify the Fire Department. To avoid multiple responses to the project area, possibly one representative of the Department could be assigned to the project area.

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Colored paper

NOTICE

SMOKE TEST

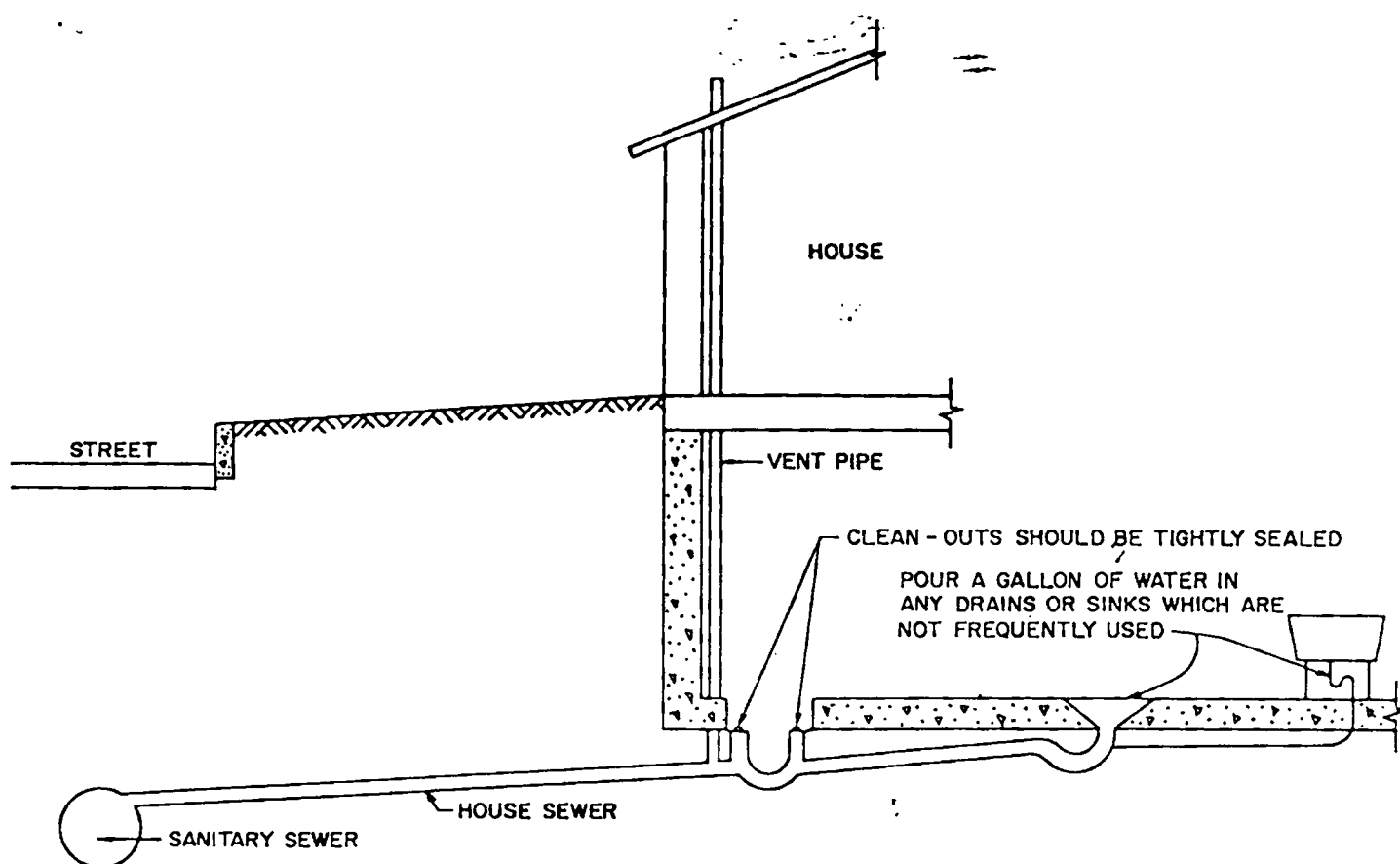
**Your Sanitary Sewer Lines
are Being Inspected for Leaks by
Means of Smoke Testing.**

THE TESTS WILL BE CONDUCTED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BOROUGH OF
NORTHUMBERLAND IN THIS AREA BETWEEN _____ AND
_____ FROM 8:00 AM TO 4:00 PM.

THE SMOKE USED IS NOT HARMFUL TO PEOPLE AND FURNISHINGS. IT IS AL-
MOST ODORLESS AND LEAVES NO RESIDUE. SMOKE CANNOT ENTER BUILD-
INGS UNLESS A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS LEAK IS PRESENT.

SHOULD YOU OBSERVE SMOKE ESCAPING FROM ANY PLACE OTHER THAN
THE ROOF VENT PIPES, IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF YOU WOULD NOTIFY
ONE OF THE PERSONNEL CONDUCTING THE TESTS OR CALL THE BOROUGH
OFFICE AT 473-3414.

(OVER PLEASE)



NOTE: CHECK YOUR BUILDING TRAPS. IF THEY ARE NOT SEALED SMOKE MAY ENTER YOUR BUILDING DURING THE TEST.

IN MAKING THIS TEST, A PROCESS CALLED "SMOKING THE LINE" WILL BE USED. THIS PROCESS CONSISTS OF INTRODUCING A HARMLESS SMOKE INTO THE SEWER SYSTEM AND OBSERVING THE LOCATIONS WHERE THE SMOKE ESCAPES. ESCAPE POINTS COULD BE FROM DRAINS IN YOUR DWELLING, CURB INLETS, OR THE GROUND ITSELF. IF THE PLUMBING IN YOUR HOME IS IN PROPER CONDITION, THE SMOKE WILL NOT ESCAPE INTO YOUR HOME. IN ORDER TO BE SURE THAT YOUR BASEMENT AND/OR AREAWAY DRAINS ARE PROPERLY SEALED, PLEASE POUR A BUCKET OF WATER IN EACH. THIS WILL ASSURE THAT NO SMOKE ESCAPES FROM THE DRAINS. DURING THE TEST, IT IS NORMAL THAT SMOKE SHOULD ESCAPE FROM THE VENT PIPE PROTRUDING THROUGH THE ROOF OF YOUR HOME, AND THIS SHOULD CAUSE NO ALARM.