

# SMOKE TESTING FAQ



In 2010, the City of Kansas City, Missouri entered into a Consent Decree with the United States Environmental Protection Agency to reduce the volume and frequency of overflows from the City's sewer system. KC Water's Smart Sewer program is the 25-year plan to address this challenge. Smoke testing is the first step in planning for future sewer rehabilitation projects, and helps detect leaks or connections where rainwater and groundwater can enter the sewer system causing basement backups and sewer overflows.

## WHAT IS SMOKE TESTING?

Smoke testing involves blowing air and artificially-produced smoke into the sewer system and seeing where it emerges. If the sewer is in good condition, the smoke will emerge from manhole covers and house vents on roofs. If the smoke emerges anywhere else, there is potential for water to enter the sewer system.

## IS THE SMOKE HAZARDOUS?

The smoke is not harmful. It is non-toxic, has no odor and is not a fire hazard.



## WHAT IF SMOKE COMES OUT OF MY DRIVEWAY OR YARD?

Smoke coming out of your driveway or yard could indicate breaks or cracks in the drain or service lateral on your property. If you see smoke on your property, contact the field crew leader.

## WHAT IF SMOKE COMES INTO MY BUILDING?

Smoke should not enter buildings unless there are leaks or defects in your plumbing. If smoke enters your building, open a door or window to ventilate the room and notify the field crew leader.

## WHEN WILL SMOKE TESTING BE PERFORMED IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD?

Crews will place door hangers on every building within the project area at least 48 hours in advance of smoke testing.

## DO I NEED TO BE HOME WHEN SMOKE TESTING IS PERFORMED?

Homeowners do not need to be home during smoke testing and field crews should not ask to enter residences. Field inspectors will be taking photos and measurements so that defects found may be repaired at a later date.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO BEFORE SMOKE TESTING?

The day that you receive notification of smoke testing, pour approximately 24 ounces of water into infrequently used floor, shower, and sink drains, filling the traps to prevent smoke from entering your home or business.

If you are disabled or have respiratory problems and would like to discuss available scheduling options for your block, please call the field crew leader or the 311 Action Center at 311 or (816) 513-1313.



## HOW WILL I RECOGNIZE FIELD CREWS?

Smoke testing teams are typically made up of two to four people, and each inspector will wear an identification badge.

Crews will post signs similar to the one shown below throughout the neighborhood where smoke testing is being conducted.

