

NOTICE: SANITARY SEWER SMOKE TESTING

Dear Resident:

During the week of **[insert DATES]**, sewer inspection crews from Prein&Newhof, an engineering firm working for Benton Charter Township, will be conducting SMOKE TESTING of our community's sanitary sewer system. Smoke testing locates breaks and defects in the sewer system, as well as places where storm and other surface waters are entering sanitary sewers.

You can expect to see work crews opening manholes in your area. Smoke testing can cause smoke to exit the sewer system through the vent stacks on houses or holes in the ground. While most residents will never see the smoke, the Township wants you to have as much information as possible about the testing. A special non-toxic harmless smoke will be used in these leak tests. The smoke is manufactured for this purpose and, therefore, has little odor, creates no fire hazard, leaves no residuals or stains and has no effect on plants and animals.

The smoke should not enter your home or business unless you have defective plumbing or dried up drain traps. Should smoke enter your home or business, please contact a member of the smoke testing crew working in the area. They will be able to provide you with additional information regarding the source of the smoke entering your home or business.

If you have any seldom-used drains, they may be dry and thus allow the smoke to enter your building. **Please pour a gallon of water in the drain to fill the trap.** Drain traps should always be filled with water to prevent sewer gases or odors from entering the building. It is also recommended that a central air conditioning condensation trap be filled. This can be accomplished by running the unit several hours.

You do not need to be present and the crew will not need to enter your building unless you invite them in. If your property is not owner-occupied, we ask that you help us by forwarding this important information to anyone living or working there.

If you have any questions, please contact **Steve Oosting** at **(616) 364-8491** during Prein&Newhof's regular office hours (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.).



image courtesy jea.com

Sincerely,

Benton Charter Township

[insert Township logo]

SMOKE TESTING: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Is the smoke harmful?

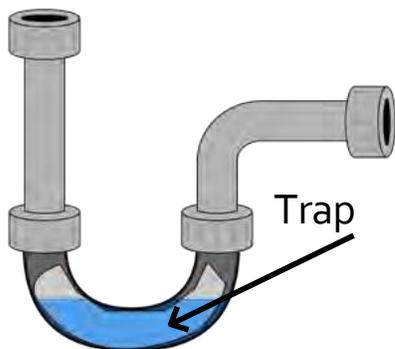
A. No. It may make you cough, but it is not harmful to your health and will not harm your clothing.

Q. How do I avoid getting smoke inside my home/business?

A. Check to see that all traps under basins, washing facilities and floor drains have water in them. If you can't tell, pour a gallon of water into the drain.

Q. What do I do if the smoke gets into my home/business?

A. Contact the crew working in the area. Open windows for ventilation.



Q. What is the purpose of smoke testing?

A. To reduce wasted expense of pumping and treating extra water that does not need to be going down the sewers. Smoke testing can reveal broken sewers and bad connections so we know where to make repairs.

Q. I will not be home during the smoke testing and I have pets in the house. What should I do?

A. The smoke is not harmful to pets. If you are concerned about how your pets may respond to smoke, you may want to leave some windows partially open for ventilation should any smoke enter the house. Make sure to keep water in the drains to help avoid the issue.

Q. If smoke gets into my home/business, how long does it take for the smoke to dissipate?

A. This depends on how much smoke there is and how much ventilation you can provide.

Q. Can smoke stop up the sewers?

A. No.

Q. What happens if you find a bad sewer or lack of traps in a building?

A. This information will be documented and given to the Township. Depending on the findings, they will then determine what steps are necessary to remedy the problem.

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