

Smoke Testing FAQs

What is the purpose of smoke testing? The main purpose of smoke testing is to try and locate the nuisance odors and locate areas where unauthorized water may be entering the sanitary system.

Who is doing the testing? Smoke testing will be conducted by the Bay County Department of Water & Sewer in conjunction with the Bay County Health Department and their contractor. Crews will be in marked vehicles and have proper identification. Anticipated working hours are from 8 am to 5 pm October 2nd and 3rd.

Who do I contact for more information and/or a problem? If you have any problems or concerns, contact: Edward Carstens at (989) 415-4156.

How will residents know when Smoke Testing will be performed in their neighborhoods? Fliers will be mailed two weeks before the testing day and again 1 – 2 days before as a reminder of the smoke testing.

How will it affect my home or business? The testing should not affect your home or your sanitary sewer service. You do not need to be present during the testing and workers will not be inside your home. Smoke could enter your home through drains if the trap is not filled, so be sure to **POUR WATER DOWN ALL THE DRAINS IN YOUR HOME, ESPECIALLY SELDOM-USED DRAINS AND FLOOR DRAINS IN YOUR BASEMENT, SLAB FLOORS, AND GARAGES**. If you have a smoke alarm that automatically calls the fire department, pouring water in your drains is particularly important to ensure that the fire department is not called unnecessarily.

Is the smoke harmful? No, this process is endorsed by the Environmental Protection Agency and has been safely used for more than 20 years. The "smoke" is not true smoke, but rather a mist containing a large percentage of atmospheric moisture that is highly visible at low concentrations. It will not harm your health or leave a stain and will disappear rapidly without leaving an odor. Material safety data sheets will be available upon request. Since any smoke can be an irritant, direct contact with the smoke may cause minor respiratory irritation in some people. Individuals with respiratory problems such as chronic asthma, emphysema or other respiratory conditions should avoid direct exposure to the smoke.

What do I do if smoke does enter my building? If smoke does enter the interior of homes, windows and doors should be opened as it will usually clear in 15-20 minutes. If residents are present during the testing, they should inform a testing crew member if smoke has entered the home.

What about pets? The smoke is not harmful to pets. The smoke used is a non-toxic substance that is harmless to humans, pets, food, and material items. If smoke does enter the building, it will clear in a few minutes with proper ventilation

Are Police and Fire aware of the smoke testing? Bay County Sheriff's Department and Kawkawlin Fire Department as well as 911 will have been notified, along with the Village of Linwood with information on the locations and dates of areas to be tested. The contractor will update Police and Fire on a daily basis with the locations for each smoke testing period.

How long are the smoke tests? The actual test on each home will take about 10-15 minutes. While testing, smoke may be seen around manhole covers, storm drains, roof vents and areas of defects. Smoke will not enter the interior of a home or business if all the plumbing is installed properly and is in good repair.