



Town of Ashland, *Office of the Department of Public Works*

For Immediate Release
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“The Town of Ashland’s Department of Public Works’ begins smoke testing next week”

*Ashland’s DPW sewer and water crew alongside vendor begin smoke testing in areas on
Thursday, September 10, 2020.*

Ashland, MA (September 3, 2020)- The Town of Ashland’s Department of Public Works’ water and sewer division alongside vendors, Haley and Ward a Division of CES and Flow Assessment Services to conduct Sewer System Smoke Testing for the purpose of locating sources of storm water inflow to the sanitary sewer system beginning next Thursday, September 10, 2020.

The Town of Ashland’s DPW crew will regularly update their webpage on the Town website, ashlandmass.com to provide weekly updates to the project. Communications will also take place on the Town’s social media accounts, and on message boards around the community. The project will take approximately 60 to 90 days to complete. Weekly updates will include a map and schedule of the crews’ location. The schedule is flexible as the crew’s movement depends on the findings in the area, thus speeding up or slowing down the progression.

Director of DPW, Doug Small says, “This is a safe and simple procedure that allows our crew to identify problem areas in our sewer system, so we then can fix the problem areas. The dry weather makes now a perfect time to complete the project.”

During the smoke testing, field crews blow air and smoke into the sanitary sewer system in the street and easements and monitor where smoke escapes the system. The smoke, under pressure, will fill the main line as well as any connections, and then follow a path of any leak to the ground surface, quickly revealing the source of the problem. Only enough force to overcome atmospheric pressure is required, and smoke should escape from building roof vents.

If smoke enters your home during the test, it may indicate there are deficiencies in the plumbing that may allow potentially sewer gases to enter. If this may occur, do not be alarmed, open windows to allow ventilation, and note the location of the smoke, it will clear within a few minutes, exit the building and notify smoke testing personnel in the area.

THIS IS NORMAL AND SHOULD NOT BE CAUSE FOR ALARM.

Smoke should not enter your premises unless there is a dry trap in your basement floor drain or any unused plumbing fixtures. You may wish to pour some water down your basement drain or unused plumbing fixture to ensure that the drain trap will be effective. Smoke could also enter the building through defective plumbing. The owner should note this because it may

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indicate the susceptibility of gases from the sewer system entering your building through the defective plumbing.

Should smoke be detected within the building, **DO NOT BE ALARMED**. The smoke is **NON-TOXIC AND NON-STAINING**. Simply ventilate the home and report the presence of smoke to the people conducting the test outside in the vicinity of your building, or contact the contractor, Flow Assessment by phone. If possible, they will assist you in locating the source that allowed the smoke to enter the building.

PLEASE NOTE:

- You are not required to be home when the testing is being performed on your street.
- The testing will be performed 24 to 72 hours after notification is received.
- Weather, holidays and weekends may shift test periods beyond the 24 to 72 hour time frame.
- Please call Flow Assessment Services @ **1-888-311-9799** should you have any questions or concerns
- Visit <https://www.ashlandmass.com/834/SMOKE-TESTING> for more information

The webpage contains documents regarding the approximate schedule, frequently asked questions, and a public education guide.

The Town of Ashland's Board of Health Agent, Police and Fire Chiefs have been notified about this test.

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