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IS **BACKFLOW** A THREAT TO YOUR HOME?

The most common type of backup in Paducah and McCracken County is caused during heavy rainfall or flooding. Older sewer mains are often susceptible to leaking during rain events or have been constructed to actually carry rainwater in addition to sanitary flow. Heavy rain events can cause too much flow for a particular sewer main to handle, causing the flow to seek alternate exit points, including inside a house or basement. In addition, blockages can occur in sewer mains due to naturally occurring items, such as roots or foreign objects that sewer mains are not designed to handle. Most backflows only occur in houses that have basements or that are constructed in low areas or below manholes in the area. There are steps a homeowner can take to proactively reduce this possibility for their home.

One way to prevent or reduce the threat of backflow is to hire a qualified plumber to install a device called a **backflow prevention valve** or a **backflow preventer**. When properly installed and maintained, this valve creates a one-way system in the sewer line in your yard or in a drain line in your basement. This allows sewage to leave your home and prevents contaminated water from re-entering your home. Costs for installing backflows are dependent upon the type of plumbing your home has and the difficulty of the installation.

Always consult a licensed professional before installing any type of backflow preventer. In certain instances, for example when a house sewer also accepts rain water flow from the roof or area drains, a backflow preventer cannot typically be installed. It is also important to note that the valves are not 100% effective and require regular inspection and maintenance.

The Paducah McCracken Joint Sewer Agency provides wastewater collection and treatment throughout most of the City of Paducah and McCracken County. JSA is responsible for operating and maintaining three wastewater treatment plants, 385 miles of gravity sewer and 75 lift stations. For more information, please contact the JSA at 270.575.0056 or visit our website at www.jointsewer.com.