

# 01 SAVE OUR STREAMS

KEEP STORM SEWERS POLLUTANT-FREE

The City of Tulsa's storm sewer system is the series of outside drains located in our streets that route rainwater to creeks, lakes and rivers. The water that goes into these drains is not cleaned or treated before it reaches them. This makes it very important to not let pollutants spill on the ground and enter our storm sewer system.

City workers regularly monitor the system for pollution. Crews also routinely remove debris from drains and sewers to prevent water from backing up into streets and homes. It is illegal to introduce pollutants into the system. Pollutants include lawn chemicals, car fluids, soaps, leaves and grass, pet waste and basically anything that isn't pure rainwater.

It is important to protect the quality and control the quantity of the water flowing into the drainage system. Here are steps you can take to protect Tulsa's creeks and reduce flood risks.

- **Maintain vehicles to prevent fluid leaks. Don't pour used motor oil, antifreeze, pesticides or other pollutants into storm drains. Storm drains are for rain.**
- **Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in the sanitary sewer, throw it in the trash or bury it in the yard to prevent harmful bacteria from entering our storm sewer system.**
- **Use a mulching mower or bag grass and leaves instead of blowing them into streets. Yard wastes clog storm drains and deplete oxygen in the water. Fish need oxygen to survive.**
- **Apply fertilizers and pesticides properly. Read labels to determine how much and when to apply. The Master Gardener program has volunteers trained to answer questions about pesticides and fertilizers. Call the Master Gardener Hotline at (918) 746-3701 or visit: [www.tulsamastergardeners.org](http://www.tulsamastergardeners.org)**
- **Pick up litter around your home or business so that it doesn't collect on drain inlets or clog sewer pipes.**
- **Report storm drain issues such as blockage, improper disposal of yard wastes and/or illegal fluid discharges by calling 311 or visiting [www.Tulsa311.com](http://www.Tulsa311.com)**



## CITY LIFE

JANUARY 2020

### IN THIS EDITION OF CITY LIFE

01

#### KEEP STREAMS CLEAN

Prevent stormwater pollution. Storm sewers drain to creeks and rivers.

02

#### SANITARY SEWER SAFETY

Call immediately if you have a sewage overflow or backup: (918) 586-6999.

03

#### GET A BUILDING PERMIT

Ensure safety of new construction or structure repairs in a floodplain.

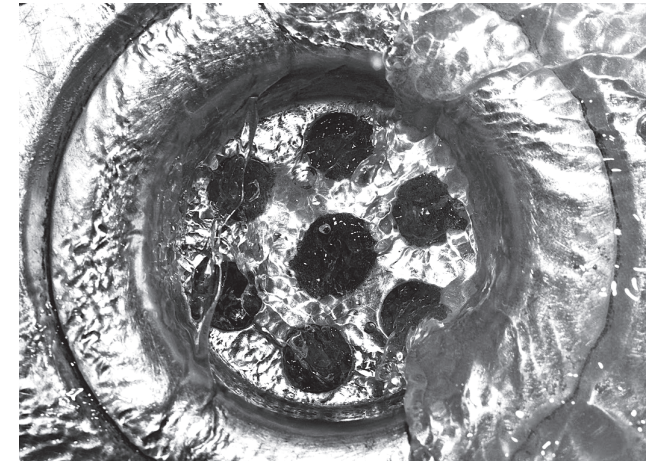
04

#### BENEFICIAL BIOSOLIDS

Sustainable program uses wastewater residuals as fertilizer for crops.

+ PLUS: PREPARE TO BE SAFE IN WINTER STORMS

[WWW.CITYOFTULSA.ORG](http://WWW.CITYOFTULSA.ORG) | [TULSA311@CITYOFTULSA.ORG](mailto:TULSA311@CITYOFTULSA.ORG) | CALL 311



# 02 SEWAGE OVERFLOW

REPORT BACKUPS/PREVENT BLOCKAGES

If you see, hear, or smell anything that may be a sewage overflow or backup in your home, call (918) 586-6999. The City's Sewer Operations and Maintenance Division is available to take your call around the clock. If needed, our work crews can inspect and take action. When calling, please be ready to describe where you see the overflow. Helpful details include an address and a specific location such as a street intersection, backyard, alleyway, garage drain, etc.

To prevent many of these sewer line blockages, never pour fats, oils or grease down the drain. These materials harden and block your sewage lines, causing costly plumbing repairs to your private lines. Fats, oils, and grease also create problems for your neighbors when the blockages occur in the City's lines. Proper disposal is easy. Just pour fats, oils and grease into a coffee can or other durable container and place in your trash.

Other problematic items include disposable wipes (also known as flushable wipes), prophylactics, and personal hygiene products. Although these products may flush from your toilet, they cause maintenance issues for our sanitary sewer system.

The Water & Sewer Department cleans approximately 500 miles of sanitary sewer lines each year, but we still need your help in preventing sewer overflows. For more details, visit: [www.trapthegreasetulsa.com](http://www.trapthegreasetulsa.com)

## 03 PERMITS NECESSARY

### CONSTRUCT SAFELY IN A FLOODPLAIN

The City of Tulsa requires property owners to obtain building permits for construction, improvements, remodeling and additions. For safety from flooding, it is especially important to get a building permit when constructing in flood-prone areas.

Tulsa's permitting process is designed to ensure that new construction and building repairs are safe. Before beginning construction or adding on to an existing building, find out which permits are needed by contacting the Permit Center at (918) 596-9456.

To help protect buildings in the floodplain, building codes require that new residential buildings be elevated at least 1 foot above the regulatory flood elevation. Non-residential buildings may be elevated or floodproofed a minimum of 1 foot above the regulatory flood elevation.

When planning substantial improvements to existing buildings, elevating or floodproofing may be required for new additions or major remodels if improvements cost 50 percent or more of the market value of the existing building.

Permits also are required for building repair for anything more than just cleanup after a storm or other damaging event. If property is substantially damaged (the cost of restoring the building to its previous condition is 50 percent or more of the market value of the building), regulations may require elevating or floodproofing before rebuilding or repairing damage.

Even if you're not constructing a building, a floodplain permit must be obtained from the City before commencing any grading, filling, or excavation including the installation of safe rooms. Be sure to get a building permit when installing safe rooms in flood-prone areas and avoid flood-prone areas when taking shelter during tornado events.

To find out if your property is located in the floodplain, contact the City's Customer Care Center at 311 with the property address or view detailed floodplain boundary maps online at <http://maps.cityoftulsa.org/floodplains>

## WINTER PREPAREDNESS

### MAKE SAFETY YOUR TOP PRIORITY

Each year, Tulsa usually experiences a few winter storms with potentially hazardous conditions. Here are some steps for readiness in case of winter storms.\*

#### HAVE A PLAN

- **Discuss with your family what to do if a winter storm watch or warning is issued. Download the TulsaReady App on your phone**
- **Check that family, friends, neighbors, especially the elderly, are prepared.**
- **Remember your pets. Make sure they have food, water and shelter.**
- **Have your car winterized by checking antifreeze, washer blades, tire pressure, etc.**

#### IF YOU MUST GO OUT IN A WINTER STORM, ASSEMBLE A KIT FOR YOUR CAR INCLUDING:

- **Cell phone with extra battery or two-way radio**
- **Windshield scraper and small broom for ice and snow removal**
- **Blankets or sleeping bags**
- **Rain gear and extra sets of dry clothing, mittens or gloves, socks and a cap**
- **Non-perishable snacks like dried fruit or nuts**
- **Bottled water**
- **Sand or cat litter for generating traction under wheels and a set of tire chains or traction mats**
- **Jumper cables, flashlight with extra batteries and first aid kit**

\* Source: Tulsa Area Emergency Management Agency, Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management, [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)



## 04 RE-USING BIOSOLIDS

### WASTEWATER RESIDUALS AS FERTILIZER

Did you know that municipal wastewater treatment plants in Tulsa separate the liquid and residual portions of wastewater for processing and treatment? Biosolids are the residuals that have undergone additional treatment (stabilization) to prepare them for environmentally acceptable beneficial use or disposal.

The City's biosolids are stabilized and applied to land in an environmentally acceptable manner in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) regulations.

Land application of biosolids is a common disposal method that has been used for decades. It involves spreading the biosolids on the soil surface or injecting them into the soil. Biosolids enrich the soil by providing organic matter and nutrients needed for crops. The most common crop utilizing biosolids is pasture land used for hay production.

Applying biosolids to land is another way the City of Tulsa's Water and Sewer Department strives for sustainability with our resources. We are able to save landfill space, provide a beneficial product for the local community, and reduce cost of service for our customers.

For additional information about the City of Tulsa's Biosolids Program, please call the City's Customer Care Center at 311.