



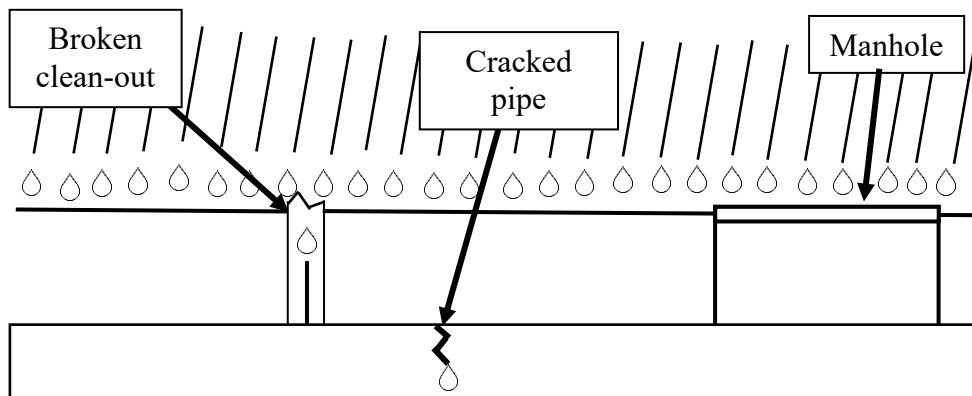
Washington County Service Authority

August 5, 2026

Dear Damascus Resident or Property Owner:

Washington County Service Authority (WCSA) is currently conducting analysis as part of its Inflow/Infiltration (I&I) Reduction Program and plans to begin smoke testing the wastewater system in your community over the next eight weeks (Aug. 10 through Oct. 2, 2026). Impacted areas will be from 30077 Drowning Ford Rd. East throughout the entire Damascus collection network.

As you know, we had a very wet summer this year. One benefit of all the rain was that it gave us at WCSA a good opportunity to analyze our wastewater collection systems for I&I. I&I stands for “inflow and infiltration” of ground water into our collection system through defects like cracks in pipes or broken clean-outs.

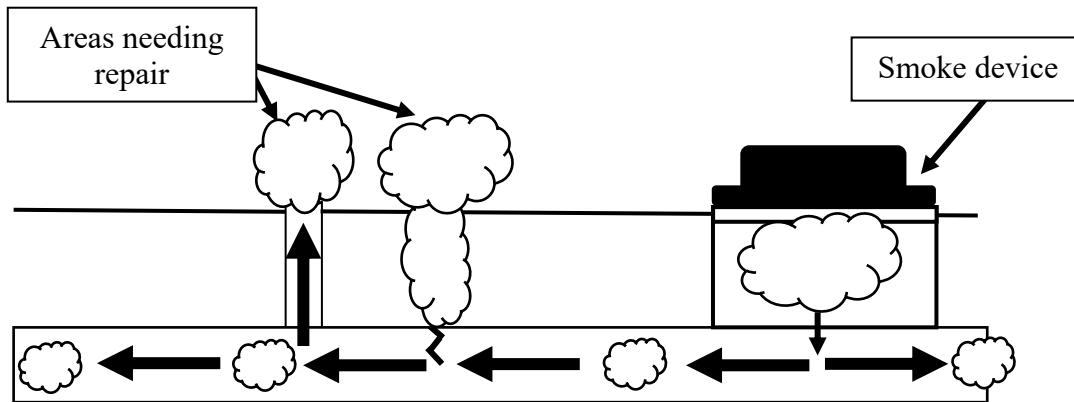


I&I is a very common issue in the wastewater industry. The floods of extra water in the collection system put a heavy strain on the wastewater treatment facilities. Without repairs to their systems, it greatly increases costs for wastewater facilities nationwide, and this cost ultimately lands on their ratepayers.

We desire to be proactive in preventing I&I. In order to find areas needing repair, the best and most common practice is to use a process known as smoke-testing. Smoke-testing is a “check-up” for our wastewater collection system. At the same time, the smoke-testing we perform also provides our customers with a “check-up” on their home sewer piping. This can help you to ensure that your home is not vulnerable to having sewer gas seep back through your system.

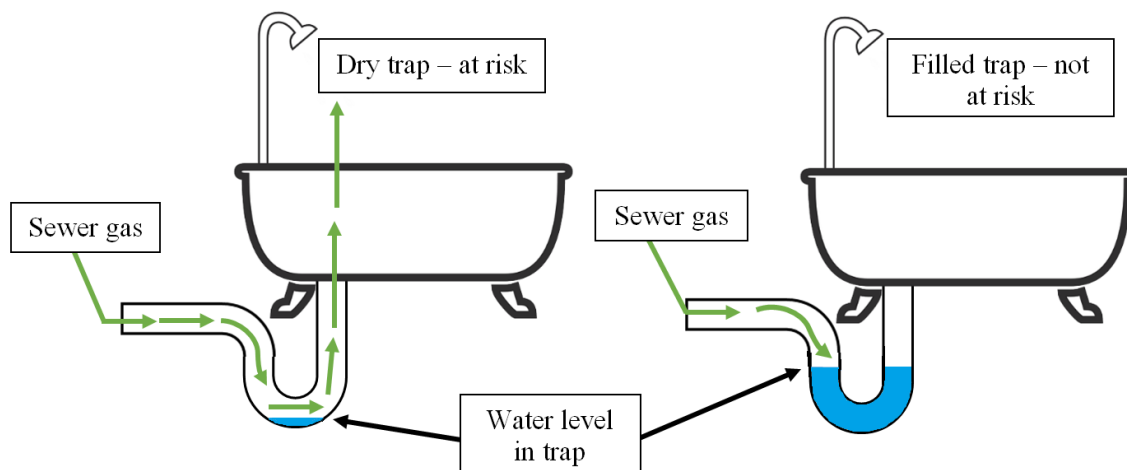
The process of a smoke “check-up” is actually quite simple:

- 1) WCSA contacts the local fire departments and places a notification on its website for customers before testing begins
- 2) Smoke is injected into a sewer manhole
- 3) Crews identify and mark areas where smoke is escaping, as these points indicate areas needing repair



The smoke used during the test is specifically designed to be non-toxic. It is commonly used throughout the industry. The smoke is not harmful to you, your pets, or house plants. It will not harm or stain clothes, drapes, or furniture. It is not flammable and does not create a fire hazard. If you will not be home and are concerned about a pet, simply isolate the pet in an area of your home where there are no sewer drains.

It is also important to know that the smoke used during the test should **not** be entering your home. If the smoke is appearing in your home, then this is a problem and a sign that your home is at risk for sewer gas to leak in as well. Common reasons for this are the lack of traps in drains or dried out traps. When a trap is properly filled with water, sewer gas/smoke should not be able to return through your drain pipes.



To prepare for smoke testing, please make sure all your drain traps and plumbing fixtures have water in them. Fill seldom used drains (such as floor drains, garage sinks, guest bathrooms, etc.) with water by running the faucet for 60 seconds or filling the drain with approximately 1 gallon of water. This only needs to be done once before testing begins. If you feel concerned, please contact a reputable plumber to ensure that you not only have traps on all drains but that they are full of water.

Reminder notices will be given to residents before work in any specific area begins. You do not need to be home during the smoke testing.

Please remember: Smoke should not come into your home. If smoke does come into your home, this is a sign that something is wrong with your plumbing. If smoke is present, your house is vulnerable to sewer gas. This issue needs to be identified and corrected to prevent sewer gas from entering your home. Homeowners are responsible for all plumbing in their home and outside of their home to the cleanout.

Remember, smoke testing:

1. maintains lower rates for customers
2. protects our environment
3. allows customers to ensure sewer gas cannot enter their homes

Thank you for your cooperation as we proactively maintain our collection systems. We will make every effort to minimize the inconvenience or disruption this project may have on you. If you have any further questions or concerns regarding smoke testing, please call 276-628-7151.