



## Backwater Prevention Device Rebate Program Frequently Asked Questions

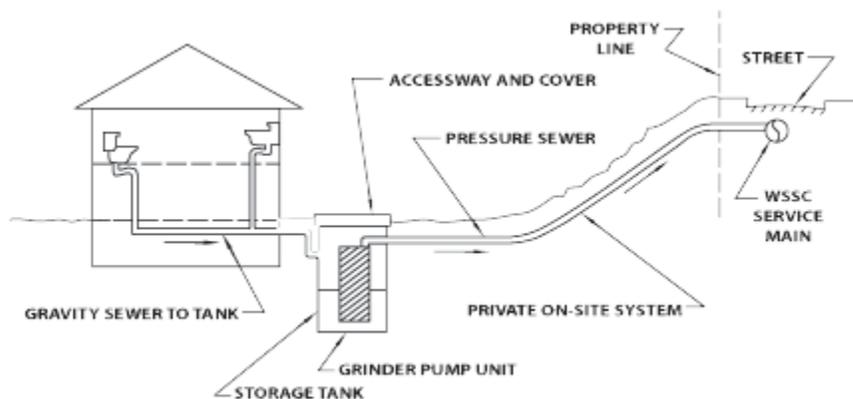
### *What is a backwater prevention device?*

During periods of heavy rainfall, flows can exceed the capacity of the city's combined sewer system, causing excess sewage to flow back through private sewer connections and into properties. Backwater prevention devices, when properly maintained, prevent this from happening. The two most common devices are backwater valves and grinder pumps.

Backwater valves are installed on private sewer connections and have a flapper that allows wastewater to flow from the property to the city's sewer line, but prevents it from flowing back into a property. These are simple, passive devices that can be easily inspected and maintained, and protect properties from sewage backups and flooding.



Grinder pumps are installed in a storage tank. When water is used, the wastewater flows into the tank. When the wastewater in the tank reaches a pre-set level, the grinder pump turns on and grinds the waste, and pumps it to the city's main sewer line. During a storm, a grinder pump continues to pump into the sewer main, preventing sewer backups.



***Why is the city requiring that they be installed?***

The city has determined that properties identified as “designated connections” are at risk for sewer backups. Since backwater prevention devices reduce that risk, the city has decided to require them on those connections. This is designed to protect real and personal property, avoid costly damages, and limit the cost to property owners, the city, and taxpayers.

***How was my property been determined to be a “designated connection”?***

The city conducted an in-depth analysis of the combined sewer system using a model that simulated extreme rainfall events. The model took into account the size, location and depth of the city’s sewer lines and whether a property had a basement (based on county records). When the model indicated that a large storm event could put a property at risk of sewer backup or flooding, it was identified as a “designated connection”.

***What does a typical installation involve?***

First, the contractor will inspect your sewer line to determine where the backwater prevention device should be located and identify any deficiencies that must be corrected. Next, the contractor will perform the work, excavating an area outside of the house to install the device on your sewer connection. When the work is complete, the contractor will restore the excavated area and place a cap or cover over the device to allow access for inspection and maintenance. If your downspouts drain into the sewer system, the contractor may disconnect them to provide further protection from backups and flooding.

***How does the city’s rebate program work?***

The rebate program is easy to use. You select a contractor from the list of eligible contractors, get a bid and have a backwater prevention device installed. When the work is complete, the contractor will give you the installation paperwork. You fill-out the rebate forms, attach it to the contractor paperwork, and submit it to the city within 90 days after the installation. Under the program, the city will pay up to \$2,500 (including tax) for the installation of a qualifying backwater prevention device. You can pay the contractor and have the rebate sent to you, or choose to have the contractor paid directly. The contractor list, instructions and program forms are available at [www.everettwa.org/bwd](http://www.everettwa.org/bwd).

***How do I participate in the rebate program?***

First, review all of the property owner forms. These forms are designed to familiarize you with the rebate process and help you understand your responsibilities. Next select a contractor from the list of eligible contractors. These contractors have been trained and know what they must do to meet the rebate program requirements. We recommend speaking to more than one contractor and to get an idea of their experience with the program. Then select a contractor and authorize the contractor to proceed with the inspection and installation. The contractor list, instructions and program forms are available at [www.everettwa.org/bwd](http://www.everettwa.org/bwd).

***What if my installation exceeds the \$2,500 threshold?***

If the bid for the work exceeds \$2,500 (including tax), it is possible that additional rebate funds will be provided for the installation. If the contractor believes the installation will exceed \$2,500, they will contact the city prior to any work being performed. The city will review the bid to determine if you qualify for additional funds and may require that you obtain additional bids for the work.

***What's the deadline for installing a backwater prevention device?***

The deadline for installing qualifying backwater prevention devices on designated connections is June 1, 2015. This deadline is specifically related to a property owner's ability to file a claim against the city for sewer backups and flooding. After June 1, 2015, the city will not pay claims from designated connections that do not have properly installed and maintained backwater prevention devices. For more information, see Ordinance 3400-14 at [www.everettwa.org/bwd](http://www.everettwa.org/bwd). The rebate offer will continue after June 1, 2015 and property owners will be notified prior to it being discontinued.

***What happens if I don't install one on my property?***

After June 1, 2015, the city will not pay sewer backup claims for designated connections that do not have backwater prevention devices. Therefore, the best way to protect your property and avoid costly damages is to install a device as soon as possible. Following the June 1, 2015 deadline, the city may install backwater valves in the city right-of-way for some designated connections that do not have a backwater prevention device. In that case, property owners will be liable for damages prior to the city's installation of a backwater valve, which could take months or years to complete.

***What if my basement floods before I install a backwater prevention device?***

The city has notified property owners of designated connections of the need to install backwater prevention devices and offers a rebate to cover the cost of installation. The city will accept claims for sewer back-ups and flooding related to the city's sewer system prior to the June 1, 2015 deadline, however, the amount the city will pay on the claims will be subject to the limits established by the new ordinance. For more information, see Ordinance 3400-14 at [www.everettwa.org/bwd](http://www.everettwa.org/bwd).

***Who is responsible for maintaining the device after it is installed?***

If you have a backwater prevention device installed on your property, you are responsible for maintaining it. Typically, this involves checking the device and performing a few simple procedures every three or four months. If you sell your property, you should disclose the presence of a backwater prevention device on the property to potential buyers because maintenance of the device becomes their responsibility following a sale. If the device is installed in the city right-of-way, the city will maintain it.

***How is the city of Everett paying for the rebate program?***

The backwater prevention device rebate program is funded through sewer rates, which means that the program is funded from the revenues we receive from rate payers throughout the city. There is no additional rate impact for properties participating in the program beyond the standard fee for sewer service. Since everyone benefits from reducing claims for sewer backups and flooding, everyone is sharing the cost of the program.