

City of Marco Island

Press Release

9-01-20
052

Beginning September 8, 2020, the City of Marco Island will be testing the integrity of the sewer collection system utilizing smoke to find and repair leaks. This test, which involves forcing smoke into the sanitary sewer lines, will check for leaks, breaks and defects in the system. The smoke is odorless, creates no fire hazard, and should not enter homes or businesses unless you have defective plumbing in need of repair.

Smoke testing will take approximately three weeks to complete and will take place on weekdays between 8:30am and 4:00pm. This test is part of our continuing effort to provide a safe, economical, efficient and environmentally sound wastewater system throughout Marco Island. The smoke testing procedure has been recommended by the United States Environmental Protection Agency as an effective means of identifying problem areas in the sewer system. Eliminating system defects and illegal connections will help the City remain in compliance with federal legislation regarding sewer systems maintenance and sanitary sewer overflows.

A color-coded map of the area affected is on the City website and is attached. The colors on the map correspond to the work schedule. This map will be updated on Fridays to reflect progress and scheduling adjustments.

How the Test Works

The test consists of forcing safe, vegetable-oil-derived smoke into the sewer lines and observing where it escapes in order to determine the location of leaks and defects. Odorless and safe, the smoke leaves no residuals or stains and has no adverse effect on people, plants, or animals.

What to Expect

While smoke can be expected to billow from manhole covers and vent stacks in roofs, it should not enter homes. To reduce the likelihood of smoke entering a building, the City recommends that you pour at least 2 gallons of water into seldom-used sinks and floor drains, where the smoke could arise due to lack of water pressure. This may be done at any time prior to the test. If smoke does enter the home during testing, immediately leave the building, notify the crews that are conducting the test or call the City at 239-825-9001. If smoke enters the home, it is an indication of a plumbing defect. It is the homeowner's responsibility to notify a plumber and to remedy the problem. Crews can assist in the

location of any defects on private property; however, the corrections of any defects are the responsibilities of the property owner.

If Problems are Found

Smoke coming from the vent stacks on houses is normal. However, smoke coming from holes in the ground is not normal and is considered a defect. All such defects will be photographed and logged. The City will contact property owners if a defect is located on private property. Property owners do not have to be home during the smoke testing.

Special Requests

While smoke testing is safe, residents who have special needs or previously received medical treatment for a heart, lung, or respiratory issues may contact the City of Marco Island at 239-825-9001 to coordinate testing times and devise alternative testing procedures if necessary.

###

