

# Justice in the Sewers Community Action Guide

## REPORT SEWAGE SMELLS & BACK-UPS TO HOUSTON 311



To report sewage across Houston to the Mayor and Public Works, please visit: <https://houston311.powerappsportals.us/en-US/> or call **311** and specify the category as sewer wastewater. **Reporting to 311 is important.** Even when the city does not resolve the issue properly, your report creates a record that allows us to hold the city accountable and work to address categories of under-investment over the long-term.

## CONTACT PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES TO RAISE CONCERNS



Your representative on City Council can help you follow up with Public Works.

- Find your council district here:  
<https://www.houstontx.gov/council/maps2020/alldistricts.pdf>
- Find your council person's contact information:  
<http://www.houstontx.gov/council/>
- Consider sharing your story at weekly city council meetings. To reserve a time to speak, contact the City Secretary at (832) 393-1100.
- When you testify, share your district, state your point quickly, be direct and respectful, and state your request of the city. Be mindful of the 3-minute time limit.

## ENGAGE WITH BAYOU CITY WATERKEEPER



Get help and learn more from Bayou City Waterkeeper:

- The "Justice in the Sewers Hub" website at <https://bayoucitywaterkeeper.org/justice-in-the-sewers-hub/> shares extensive information and resources related to the 2021 consent decree and sewage justice in Houston.
- Contact Bayou City Waterkeeper if you have questions or need other help. Call us at **(713) 364-6323** or fill out the form on our website: <https://bayoucitywaterkeeper.org/report-a-polluter/>. Please provide your name, zip code, number, and a brief description of your sewage concerns.

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## USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO RAISE AWARENESS



Social media may reinforce direct advocacy to your representatives.

- On your preferred platform, tell your story and encourage others to share their experiences.
- Tag the City of Houston, Houston Public Works, your elected representatives, and Bayou City Waterkeeper to increase visibility and engagement.
- Use hashtags like #PooFreeBayouCity, #JusticeintheSewers, #EnvironmentalJustice, and #CleanWater4HOU to engage others.
- Be direct and respectful when interacting with others on social media, even when you are understandably angry or upset.
- Learn more from our social media toolkit:

<https://bayoucitywaterkeeper.org/justice-in-the-sewers-hub/>

## MEDIA COMMENTS



Print, TV, and radio media coverage also may reinforce direct advocacy. Bayou City Waterkeeper can support you in amplifying your story:

**Newspaper coverage:** Contact the reporter directly and share your concerns in detail. Reporters who have covered issues related to sewage justice:

- Katie Watkins, Houston Public Media, [kwatkins@houstonpublicmedia.org](mailto:kwatkins@houstonpublicmedia.org)
- Alejandra Martinez, Texas Tribune, [alejandra.martinez@texastribune.org](mailto:alejandra.martinez@texastribune.org)
- Dylan McGuinness, Houston Chronicle, [dylan.mcguinness@chron.com](mailto:dylan.mcguinness@chron.com)

**Newspaper op-eds or letters to the editor:** Tell your story using your own words through an op-ed or letter to the editor.

- View the Houston Chronicle's submission guidelines:  
<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/opinion/submit/>.
- Op-eds must not exceed 700 words and should be submitted as a Word document to [oped@chron.com](mailto:oped@chron.com).
- Letters to the editor: Keep your writing brief and clear, use specific examples, make a strong opening, be respectful, and check for errors.

**Radio/Podcast:** Send your pitch to:

- CityCast Houston: [houston@citycast.fm](mailto:houston@citycast.fm)
- Houston Public Media: [news@houstonpublicmedia.org](mailto:news@houstonpublicmedia.org)

**TV:** If you want to tell your story to a news station, here is list of journalists you can contact that might be able to help you out.

- Greg Grogan, Fox26 Houston, [greg.groogan@foxtv.com](mailto:greg.groogan@foxtv.com)
- Matt Dougherty, KHOU, [mdougherty@khon.com](mailto:mdougherty@khon.com)
- Andy Cerota, Click2Houston, [acerota@kprc.com](mailto:acerota@kprc.com)

