

# Sewer Smell Inside the House Do's & Don'ts

## DO



Rarely used bathtubs or sinks can raise a stink. The P-trap under a sink or tub holds water to stop sewer gas from escaping into your home. In a seldom used bathtub or sink, the water in the P-trap can evaporate, allowing sewer gas to enter. If you have any rarely used plumbing fixtures, be sure to run water down the drain at least twice a month to keep the trap full.



Check the toilet wax ring. When a toilet is set in place, a wax ring seals the drain beneath and prevents water seepage and sewer gas from escaping. Although the toilet wax ring is designed not to degrade, a loose toilet bowl can damage the wax seal. Check your toilet bowl to ensure it is secure. If the bowl is loose or wobbly, have the toilet reset with a new bowl wax.



Caulk the toilet base. Water that gets stuck in crevices and can't dry will grow bacteria – which can smell bad. When there's no caulk seal around the base of your toilet, water and urine can seep underneath. Applying a bead of tub and tile caulk around the base of the toilet, where it rests on the finish flooring, is a simple answer to the problem.



Get rid of bacteria growth in drains. Microbes feed on organic matter washed down the drain. If the opening of the drain contains build up of soap scum, it creates a place for bacteria to thrive. The secret to getting rid of the bacterial growth is multiple application of an enzyme drain cleaner like BioLine or Bio-Clean.



Check the sewer cleanout caps. The cover plates that are used to hid cleanout caps in the wall are attached to the cleanout cap via a screw. This screw may decompose over time. As a result, sewer gas can escape the cleanout cap. Check for these plates in your home under kitchen sinds, bathroom sinks, behind washing machines and behind toilets.

## DON'T



Put bleach or other household chemicals down toilet sinks, tub or shower drains. Bleach is a useful cleaner and disinfectant (although there are safer eco-friendly alternatives to bleach you should use instead). But bousing it down the drain will not do anything to help keep the drains clear. In addition, you could cause a dangerous chemical reaction if it comes into contact with other household products you might be using.



Hesitate to call a professional if you can't remedy the sewer smell in a timely manner. Sometimes pouring some vinegar (or a more effective, BioLine or Bio-Clean) down a drain can help to get rid of a fould odor. But a sewer smell in the house should not be taken lightly either. A sewer smell is indicative of methane gas and bacteria being present in the air. Headaches can result, but if left untreated there can also be health consequences as well. If you smell sewer gas, act promptly.



Pour grease, fats or oils down the drain. The fats and oils will collect allowing bacteria to grow which could lead to a bad sewer smell.