

To whom it may concern:

Quincy Wilgenbusch and Savannah Salow are writing to inform you of an incident that occurred on December 13, 2025, and wish for you, the Dyersville City Council, to help make the situation better. This incident occurred due to the city sewer line backing up into our house (822 1st St SW). We feel since this was caused by the city sewer line, we should not have to take full responsibility for the expenses this has caused.

- Earlier that week, on one of these dates 12/9-12/11- Quincy saw City of Dyersville employees working at the lift station at 1:30 am (No vac truck present on site) and per Mr. Michels at the 12/15 city council meeting, they had a down pump at the 3rd St lift station
 - Mr. Michels stated that the lift station is running with one pump. Is this still accurate? How do we know this won't happen again especially if these pumps were placed in the 90's? (Jan 5th city council meeting)
 - Was the line jetted after the pump was replaced or even fully inspected? Was this problem fixed that day or was it a temporary fix? The city is stating they do not know what caused the clog.

On December 13, 2025:

- 10 am- Savannah noticed toilets were bubbling (Quincy advised Savannah to not use water until he got home to inspect the situation; Assuming it could be our service sewer line due to tree roots, as this was an issue in the past years ago)
- 4 pm- Noticed sewage water around the floor drain and in the shower in the basement bathroom
- 5 pm- Sewage water is in the utility room, bathroom, hallway carpet, backroom carpet (Savannah was home alone as Quincy was out during this time). Savannah ran the shop vac and was carrying the bucket outside, dumping it, refilling, etc
- 5:45 pm- Savannah's parents, Quincy, and Savannah were running two shop vacs and a sump pump and could NOT keep up with the sewage water at this point. Our main water line was off. Sewage was still pouring in
- 6:15-We shut off our manual sewer valve. We called the City of Dyersville (There is no number to call in these emergency situations, no on-call number for Public Works, or even a voicemail) We called the police station in town and they sent an officer to our house).
 - Once the Police officer arrived to our house, Quincy asked if he could call Harter Septic so we could get a septic truck down here to pump the city sewer line to relieve pressure, and the police officer agreed. We called Harter Septic and he stated he couldn't come until he got a call from the city
 - We then told the Public Works on-call person (who the cop got ahold of) to call Harter Septic, but the Public Works employee said they had it handled and did not call at this time

- Quincy and Savannah ran to all of the neighbors informing them of the situation and told them to check their basements where 3 other people found sewage back up, and wouldn't have known about it had Quincy and Savannah not told them.
- 7:00- 2 shop vacs, sump pump running, at least 6-8" of standing sewage water in the bathroom that was running into other rooms (over ankle deep), the shower was full and pouring out from over the edge, utility room was wet, ¼ of the back room w/ carpet wet, hallway carpet wet, drywall in the bathroom wet, baseboards covered in sewage in the bathroom, backroom, hallway, and living area
 - Public Works employee, Quincy, and neighbor popped four manhole covers on the street. The manhole near Angie Pottebaum's house had sewage that was 8" from the top (the lid).
 - We asked if they could just put a pump/sump pump down in the manhole and run it down the street in an emergency situation like this; Public Works employee refused, sewage kept pouring into the neighbor's house
- 7:20- **Harter Septic called** the city and asked if his services were needed. The City finally agreed to call him in
- 8:15- Robb arrived on scene and pumped out 5200 gallons of sewage from the manhole
 - Unsure of exact time-City was using the jetter down at the SW lift station and couldn't get the pipe cleared. They tried for at least 45 minutes. Brock Harter was instructed to go over there and he asked to do it. The city said they had it covered, finally after some time the city allowed Brock to take over and he had it cleared in 12 minutes.
- 10:00 pm- A long term Public Works employee stated "The city is at fault here so contact your insurance..."

We also need to note that this sewage was not from the tenants of the house but from the neighborhood since this was the city's main line that was clogged and not our own line. We were standing and putting our hands, arms, feet, and legs in the neighborhood sewage.

We believe there was major neglect from the city on the timing of help. We asked the Public Works person to call in Harter Septic at 6:15 but Robb didn't get the approval to come help until 7:20 with a good 20-30 minute drive/get equipment ready to get here.

The City's liability insurance is denying us because we are not connected to the SW lift station. The liability insurance is making this decision based off of the information provided to them from the City of Dyersville. If we aren't connected to that lift station, which one are we connected to? That lift station is the only one on this side of town, and is a major lift station.

Per the previous city council meetings, Mr. Wandsnider has stated that cameras are not able to fit into the inverted siphon due to them being at a right angle and a smaller pipe. They were unable to scope that area after "clearing the clog." How are we 100% certain if we don't have eyes on it? (Jan 5th city council meeting)

Mr. Wandsnider also stated you service the town sewer lines $\frac{1}{3}$ at a time, when was the last time the SW side was done before this incident? He also stated he was unaware that where the clog occurred, the pipe was an inverted siphon, how was this not known until now? He also stated the inverted siphon normally has two pipes, but this one only has one. Is this up to standards, if not why hasn't it been changed? When was the last time this pipe was inspected? (Jan 5th city council meeting)

During the time of this incident, temperatures were extremely cold. Mr. Wandsnider stated at the 12/15 city council meeting that one of his employees had to go in and break up ice at the Sewer Plant. If you cannot determine what caused the clog, why should all of the responsibility be on the home owners of this incident when it wasn't even our line that caused the back up?

Per the goal setting agenda on 1/19, you discussed how "West side Lift station issues (panel, pumps, etc) were surprise expenses." Multiple surprise issues have been reported with this lift station, so has maintenance been properly serviced on that lift station?

That lift station sits out in the open enduring all of the elements, other towns use foam to wrap around the lift station to insulate it so they don't have issues with the panels, pumps, etc due to the weather/elements. Is this something you should/could look into?

We were also never contacted by anyone from the city, in any department, in any way during this whole experience. The lack of communication and support has been extremely disappointing.

Per Mr. Wandsnider's email in the 2/16 agenda he stated that there was an electrical issue that caused damage to the panel and to one of the two pumps. He also stated this lift station is one of the city's busiest stations next to the main lift. He stated that the replacements for this lift station were not even ordered yet, so this potentially could happen again. He also noted our incident but used the wrong date as it happened on December 13th, but the nonchalant tone of the incident is far from what occurred. We would like to know what is being done so this does not occur again? Why are these parts ordered yet? If this lift station is designed for three pumps why are we only running it with two? But now that one is down, why are we only running it with one?

I will include a snippet of the email Wandsnider included in the agenda:

On Dec 1st we got called out to West Side lift station for a high-level alarm. It was determined that there was some type of electrical issue that caused damage to the panel and to one of the pumps. With the lift station being constructed in 1994 and Pump 1 was replaced in 8-1-16 and the pump 2 that was damaged was replaced in 5-12-15. That is one of our busiest stations next to the main lift which takes on the whole system. With the power system that is at that station is unique, the option of getting a fast replacement option is not very common. We are looking into options for updates which would include new pumps and upgrading to three pumps which the lift station was designed for and SCADA. We are working with our pump company to get things going.

On Dec 12th we got called out to the southwest side of town for a sewer backup in a few homes. Other than that, we have been working on equipment maintenance and lining up replacement parts to continue the west plant clarifier rehab project.

We have incurred a lot of costs due to the city sewer line backing up and flooding our basement. All of the carpet had to be ripped up, thrown away, floors professionally cleaned, drywall in the bathroom cut out, trim popped off and professionally cleaned, new carpet installed, new drywall installed, materials, and labor.

We would like the Public Works maintenance records for the sewer lines sent to us as we would like to review this information for ourselves.

We believe the city should take accountability for their part and help us with this financial burden. We have been dealing with this since before Christmas. We would like our lives to get back to normal and believe we shouldn't have to foot this bill by ourselves since this was a city issue.

Any questions?

Thanks,

Quincy Wilgenbusch

Savannah Salow