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**ELECTRIC  
DISTRICT HEAT  
WATER  
WASTEWATER  
SOLID WASTE**

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For Immediate Release

### JAMESTOWN BPU SEWER DIVISION ANNOUNCES 2010 SMOKE TESTING

The Jamestown Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Sewer Division announces that smoke testing of sanitary sewer lines on the southeast side of the City will take place for several weeks this summer, beginning Monday, July 12, weather permitting, and continuing until the area testing is complete. Testing will take place between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. weekdays.

The general area to be tested this summer will extend east of South Main St. to the City line; and from the south City line north to the Chadakoin River.

The BPU will notify residents prior to beginning the smoke testing by placing bright green door hangers on every building on the streets to be smoke tested each week. If there is no tag on a building, there will be no smoke testing in that area that week. The BPU also will post the smoke testing schedule on the utility web site at [www.jamestownbpu.com](http://www.jamestownbpu.com).

*Smoke testing during the weeks of July 12 and July 19 will take place from the south city line north to Camp Street; and east of South Main Street to Countryview Estates. The scheduled location of the testing is subject to possible emergency maintenance sewer calls.*

Smoke testing of sanitary sewer lines is part of a proactive sewer maintenance program to protect residents from problems that can occur when underground sewer lines break down. Problems that could take place include sewage backup into connected buildings, excessive loading on sewage treatment facilities and overflow of untreated sewage into lakes and streams.

The Environmental Protection Agency's new Capacity, Management, Operations and Maintenance Rule emphasizes a proactive sewer maintenance program.

Smoke testing has been used for more than 40 years. The sewer problems that will be identified by the process include: broken sewer pipes, leaking manholes, cross-connections between storm and sanitary sewers and abandoned lines that aren't properly plugged.

"Because sanitary sewers are underground and work well almost all the time," says Becky Robbins, BPU Communications Coordinator, "we don't think much about them. Over the years, however, pipes break, joints open, abandoned connections are not properly plugged and trouble – such as sewer backups into basements - can happen. Smoke testing helps BPU employees identify needed maintenance to prevent problems."

According to Robbins, BPU sewer employees smoke test by placing non-explosive smoke candles in manholes and blowing the smoke through the lines with a smoke test blower. A white to grey smoke will be observed above ground if sewer line repairs are needed. BPU employees mark the locations by spraying green paint or placing green flags on the ground.

Smoke may be expected to be seen exiting sewer pipes on roofs, as seen in the picture.

Smoke that may appear is non-toxic, harmless and has no odor. It does not create a fire hazard and residents should not be alarmed by the test smoke.

Customers do not need to be home at the time their street is tested. However, customers should pour three cups of water into basement floor drains and seldom-used sink, shower or tub drains to prevent sewer test smoke from entering the building or house.

If smoke should enter a building or residence, despite water being placed in unused drains, it probably means that there are defects in the plumbing that could allow sewer gas to enter in the future *if the problem is not repaired*. In such a case, the property owner should contact the BPU Plumbing Inspector/Waste Water Collection Supervisor, who can discuss what should be done to correct the problem. Doors and windows may be opened to ventilate any smoke that enters the building or house.

If smoke in a home appears *not* to be related to sewer smoke testing, residents always should call the fire department.

For questions or more information contact Carl Spitale, BPU Plumbing Inspector/Waste Water Collection Supervisor at 661-1654; or Mrs. Robbins at 661-1666.