Learn to differentiate between clogged sewer pipes and backed-up septic tanks with tips on identifying each issue

If sewage is backing up into your house
it can be one of two things:

1) Clogged Sewer Pipes: A clog in the piping in your house is the most common scenario that leads to sewage backups. A clog in the piping in the house usually only affects one or two plumbing fixtures (a toilet, sink, or bathtub, etc.) while other fixtures operate normally. If it is only one or two fixtures having issues while everything else works normally, this is most likely a clog in the piping in the house.

2) Backed-up Septic Tank: A backed up septic tank is a major problem and the signs are usually clearly identifiable. In this case, sewage will back up and come out of the LOWEST drains/toilets/baths in the house. You may also find sewage pooling outside your home and yard. A backed up septic tank happens when it is full of solids. Septic tanks are ALWAYS full of liquids and solids, it is only when they are too full of solids that they backup and cause problems. To prevent build-up of solids, septic tanks should be pumped out every 3-5 years depending on how many people live in the house.

If sewage is backing up outside your house and in your yard:

1) Your septic tank is backed up and overflowing to the lowest point it can exit in your yard. This can be difficult to identify as all fixtures in the house will work normally and only when the pools of sewage are observed outside your home that the problem is identified.

What to do when you have a sewage backup:

1. Stop using water in the house until the issue is identified.
2. Call in a Work Order to Úll̓us reception and describe the issue as best you can including the urgency.
3. Public Works will respond as soon as they can and drop by to assess the situation. Be prepared to show them around your house and yard.
4. Public Works will work on resolving the issue and will call the sewage pumper truck only if the septic tank is determined to be the problem.