

## ABOUT P-TRAPS...

The water in a p-trap is a barrier that prevents sewer gas from rising up through drains and toilets into a house or other building.

Sewer gas is formed in the natural breakdown of solids in wastewater due to the activity of bacteria.

Sewer gas may not only have an offensive odor, it may include methane, which is potentially combustible.

P-traps are built into toilets and are required in plumbing drains under State-wide building code.

If you smell sewer gas inside a home or other building, a faulty or dry P-trap may be the cause.

As indicated in the HIGHLIGHTS of this brochure, you can fill a dry p-trap by flushing a toilet, pouring water in a floor drain or running water down the sink.

If these actions do not keep sewer gas from getting into a building, there may be a leak or loose connection at the p-trap. (You may need help from a plumber.)

### Questions or comments?

Please contact us at 919-968-4421 or [info@owasa.org](mailto:info@owasa.org).

## HIGHLIGHTS

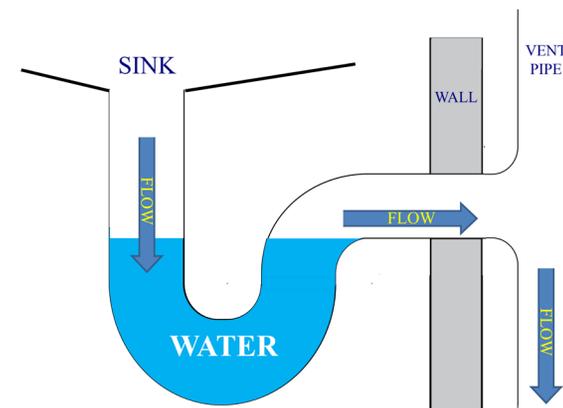
This brochure provides information about p-traps in plumbing systems:

- ◆ A p-trap is a plumbing device that prevents the odorous gas in drains and sewers from rising up through a toilet, sink or floor drain into a home or other business.
- ◆ A p-trap is a U-shaped section of pipe that holds water as shown in the diagram in this brochure.
- ◆ If a drain, sink or toilet is not used for a long time, or if there is a leak in the p-trap, it may go dry and allow sewer gas to rise into a home or other building.
- ◆ To refill a P-trap, flush the toilet, pour water in the floor drain or run water down the sink. Then check to make sure the sewer gas has stopped coming into the building. If sewer gas continues, a repair or other maintenance may be needed.

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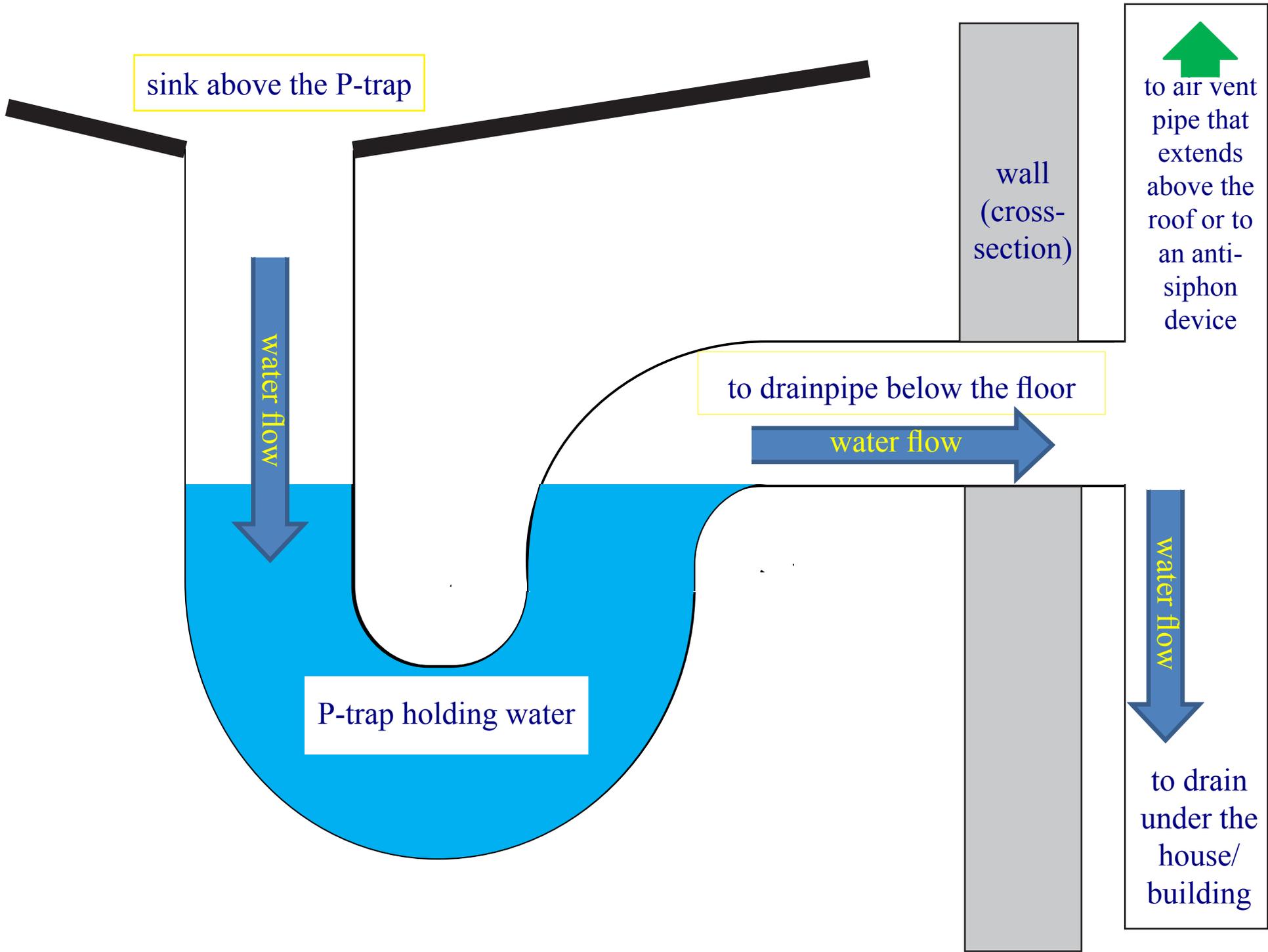


# WHAT IS A P-TRAP?



Orange Water and Sewer Authority

*A public, non-profit agency providing water, sewer and reclaimed water services to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community*



sink above the P-trap

water flow

P-trap holding water

to drainpipe below the floor

water flow

wall (cross-section)

to air vent pipe that extends above the roof or to an anti-siphon device

water flow

to drain under the house/building