Stopped Up Drain

Cooperative Extension Service
South Dakota State University

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**Things That You May Need**

- **Plunger or "Plumber's Friend"**
- **Adjustable Wrench**
- **A "Snake" Made of Steel for Use in Pushing Through Sludge in the Drain**
- **Piece of Wire to Hook Into and Pull an Object Out of the Drain**
- **Packing or New Gaskets for Use in Stopping Any Leaks in the Joints of the Traps**

You will not always have or need all of these tools to repair a stopped up drain. But it would be a good idea to write down next to the drawings the person or place that might have one or more of them available.

If your sink does not drain properly first TRY THE PLUNGER. Many times this will make the drain work as it should. But if the plunger does not open the drain, then you will need to remove the SINK TRAP.

"Stopped Up Drain" is especially adapted for use in this series from a similar publication of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare—Public Health Service.

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When you remove the trap, water in the sink and trap will be released onto the floor. PUT A LARGE PAN UNDER THE TRAP to catch the water before unscrewing the trap. There are two CAP NUTS which must be unscrewed. Use the adjustable wrench. After you have unscrewed the cap nuts, the trap will slip off.

Check the inside of the trap. You can use a piece of wire to help clean out objects or dirt that may be in the pipe.

The location of the two gaskets which keep the trap from leaking are shown in this drawing. If they are not in good shape, replace them. String can be used temporarily if you do not have new gaskets handy.

Sometimes the drain pipe becomes clogged between the trap and the main sewer line. There is a special tool for cleaning a drain pipe. It is called a SNAKE and is made of special metal. With the trap removed, you can force the metal snake down the drain pipe to open up a clogged place.

Tub or Shower

The trap of a tub or shower does not often become clogged although it can sometimes happen. If it does happen, it usually will be caused by objects such as hairpins. You will need to remove the trap and clean it out.
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