

**Regulations for cleansing cesspools : together with suggestions for facilitating public or private efforts for sanitary purposes. August, 1848.**

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# Metropolitan Sewers.

## REGULATIONS FOR CLEANSING CESSPOOLS.

AUGUST, 1848.

Her Majesty's Justices and Commissioners of Sewers having taken into consideration the serious evils and hindrances to the public health which arise from Cesspools remaining full of putrescent matter under the public ways, and within private premises; and also from the improper and expensive methods usually adopted for emptying such Cesspools; hereby give Notice that they have caused a series of Regulations to be drawn up for the instruction of their own Officers, and also Suggestions for facilitating public or private efforts for Sanitary Purposes, as follows, viz.:—

### *As to cleansing Cesspools in Public Streets or Courts.*

That the Surveyors take immediate steps for the cleansing of Cesspools situated under the public way either in Streets, Courts, or Alleys, and wherever it may be done by conveying the night-soil into the Sewers by means of a pump with suction and discharge-pipes.

That they be empowered to obtain Water from the Water Companies, and to procure engines, pumps, hose, and apparatus, for the purpose.

That they put themselves in communication with parochial or other local authorities having charge of the cleansing of Cesspools, and any voluntary associations having that object, and co-operate with them. That, if the present number of foremen and labourers be insufficient, the necessary additional number be engaged by the Surveyors.

### *As to the method to be generally used for cleansing such Cesspools.*

- 1st. Force-pumps made with long and flexible suction-pipes and discharge-pipes for the purpose, and which may be taken down narrow Courts and Alleys, and worked by hand, should be used.



- 2nd. The suction-pipe should be put down into the Cesspool, and the discharge-pipe should be led away through the passage to the nearest gully-shoot. The grating of the gully should be taken out, and the discharge-pipe should be put down, where it may, to the bottom of the Sewer. The water in the Sewer should be penned up to receive and mix at once with the night-soil discharged from the Cesspool through the discharge-pipe.
- 3rd. A hose should be brought from the nearest water-plug, down the Court or Alley, to the Cesspool, so as to let a stream of water into the Cesspool to mix with the night-soil enough to let it be worked freely by the pump. A cloth or sack should be placed over the mouth of the gully-shoot to keep down the foul air.
- 4th. When the night-soil from the Cesspools of a row of houses or streets has been discharged into the Sewer, the Sewer-water should be discharged with the flush.

*As to cleansing Cesspools on Private Premises.*

1. That, upon complaint being made by any person of the existence of an offensive Cesspool, the Order-Clerk do forthwith cause a notice to cleanse and abate the same to be served upon the proper parties.
2. That the Surveyors make arrangements, as quickly as possible, for the employment of a person or persons in each Commission, to whom parties may be referred, and who will undertake the cleansing of Cesspools by means of a pump and flexible pipes where there is a Sewer within a reasonable distance, or by an air-tight cart when at a distance from a Sewer, at a fixed scale of charges.

MEM.—*It is expected that these charges will be much less than the Nightmen's charges, and that the time spent will be about one-fifth.*

3. That the Surveyors take especial care that the persons so employed be provided with proper pumps, hose, carts, and apparatus, and also with deodorising and disinfecting liquors; that they provide a good shoot for the night-soil removed by the air-tight carts, in such a place as not to be hurtful or offensive; that they be furnished with printed Regulations as to the time and manner of doing the work; and that they be bound under a penalty to abide by such Regulations, and also by the directions of the Officer of the Commissioners appointed to overlook the work of cleansing Cesspools.

*As to filling up Cesspools.*

That where practicable, and especially in those neighbourhoods where Sewers' rates have been paid for years without corresponding advantage, all Cesspools under the control of the Commissioners be filled up, and pipe-drains be put down instead. That such Cesspools be filled up with dry rubbish or other suitable matters, with which a due proportion of lime shall be mixed.



### SUGGESTIONS FOR FACILITATING PUBLIC OR PRIVATE EFFORTS FOR SANITARY PURPOSES.

1. That the Paving Board, or the authorities having charge of the scavenging and the removal of dust and ashes, be asked to join with the Officers of the Sewers' Commission in the cleansing of all Cesspools, particularly those in crowded Courts and Alleys, and to remove at the same time all dust and refuse.
2. That the Dust Contractors, who are under contract to remove dust and ashes, be required to fulfil their contracts; and that for extra work, beyond the term of their contracts, payment be made to them.
3. That parties desiring to have their Cesspools cleansed be requested to make application at the Sewers' Office, No. 1 Greek Street, Soho Square, where they will be referred to persons who will undertake the work by means of a pump and flexible pipes, at a fixed scale of charges.

*MEM.—It is expected that the charges will be much less than the Nightmen's charges, and that the time spent will be about one-fifth.*

4. That any refuse which, in the opinion of the Surveyor of Sewers, may be received into the Sewers and removed by flushing, be removed in that mode.
5. That lime and pails be provided (from the )  
and the inhabitants of the Courts and Alleys cleansed be asked to use them.
6. That the Water Companies be requested to keep their engines at work, and keep supplies constantly on, to help the cleansing; and that, if necessary, an agreement be made with them for the payment of the requisite extra expense and labour.
7. That the Union Officers, Parochial or other Paving and Cleansing Boards, or voluntary Associations, be requested to give information as to the places where the cleansing of Cesspools is most required.
8. That the method to be generally used for emptying Cesspools be as follows, and must be used under the directions of the Officers of the Commissioners of Sewers.
9. Force-pumps made with long and flexible suction-pipes and discharge-pipes for the purpose, and which may be taken down narrow Courts and Alleys, and worked by hand with suitable lengths of hose attached, should be used.

(Note.) These pumps, with workmen and apparatus, may be hired of  
at a fixed scale of charges.

Where such force-pumps cannot be had, the parish fire-engine may be used instead.

A hose should be brought from the nearest water-plug, down the Court or Alley, into the Cesspool, so as to let a stream of water into the Cesspool to mix with the night-soil enough to let it be worked freely by the pump.



The suction-pipe should be put down into the Cesspool, and the discharge-pipe should be led away through the passage to the nearest gully-shoot. The grating of the gully should be taken out, and the discharge-pipe should be put down, where it may, to the bottom of the Sewer. The water in the Sewer should be penned up to receive and mix at once with the matter discharged from the Cesspool through the discharge-pipe.

A cloth should be placed over the mouth of the gully-shoot to keep down the foul air.

The man having charge of the water-hose should use the water freely, not only to wash the privies, but to remove any filth on the walls of the privies or of the yards and buildings, and also the pavement, taking care, however, not to leave any pools of water or do any damage.

Spare lengths of hose, suction-pipes, and discharge-pipes, should be got, which may be joined on when wanted so as to be carried through passages to Cesspools in back yards. A suction-pipe may be worked, when 150 or 200 yards long, and with its mouth twenty or twenty-five feet deep in the Cesspool.

The pump or engine may stand and be worked in the street. When the men are careful and properly trained, the work may be done with but little smell and no dirt as compared with the common method, and as much cleansing may be done in one hour by the pump as in several by the use of buckets.

With sufficient pipes (to be lengthened as needed) the work may be carried on from house to house; when one Cesspool has been emptied, taking out the suction-pipe, carrying it through the passage of the next house to the next Cesspool; and so going on from house to house without taking out the discharge-pipe from the gully-shoot, until the lengths joined on to the discharge-pipe have made it *several hundred yards long*, and the pump begins to work very heavily.

10. Where there is no sewer within several hundred yards, air-tight carts must be used, and the night-soil may be pumped into them instead of into the gully-shoot. Some purifying liquor should be used, as the Officer in charge may direct.

For cleansing houses by white-washing, two men should be employed. They should have a common pail and large-sized painter's whitening brushes. The pail should hold the lime-water, made of fresh quicklime and clean water, just thick enough to whiten the walls when spread on them with the brush. If handy men are employed, there need not be any fear of their making a troublesome mess, or splashing the lime-water about.

The expense of white-washing, as done at Edinburgh, is thus stated :

From September 14 to November 7, the wages to men and overseers employed in lime-washing and cleansing amounted to .				31	7	5
The cost of lime to . . . . .				3	8	0
Tools, say . . . . .				6	10	0
Chloride of lime, say . . . . .				0	14	7
Together .				£42	0	0

During this period there have been lime-washed and cleaned—

	303 Staircases.
	898 Rooms.
	248 Closets.
	894 Passages.
Total .	<u>2343</u>

The average expense of each is  $4\frac{3}{16}$ , or a fraction above  $4\frac{1}{4}$ d. each.

The estimate for such internal cleansing on a larger scale is as follows :—

In Edinburgh there are 10,098, say 11,000 houses, at and under 4*l.* rent : one-fifth of the occupants of them are in such circumstances as to be beyond the necessity of requiring public aid ; one-fifth more are cleanly and orderly in their habits, and would not require public assistance. Now supposing the cleansing to extend to houses under 4*l.*, and allowing 1,000 houses in which cases of fever may occur in dwellings above that rent where the parties could not afford to cleanse for themselves, the houses to be cleansed would be 7,600. The cost of cleansing each separate place is  $3\frac{1}{4}$ d. ; but in order to include staircases, lobbies, and such like places, let us take the cost as high as 7d. each, include also in the above calculation the expense of 2,400 fumigations, then the total cost for cleansing and fumigating annually 7,600 houses would be 221*l.* But this calculation is based on the assumption that a special cleansing corps were retained for that purpose. By taking advantage of the services of the ordinary scavengers in the performance of this work, the expense will be greatly reduced.

LEWIS C. HERTSLET,  
ORDER-CLERK.

*Sewers' Office, No. 1 Greek Street, Soho Square.*



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L. E. H. H. H. H. H.