

**GREG BARRON:** If you've ever wondered how safe it would be to stand around on top of one of those steaming manhole covers found around town, I'm here to tell you it's not a good idea, at least not near Park Square in Downtown Saint Paul. This morning I had the chance to witness the last half of a two act show that may turn out to be a new local tourist attraction-- periodic discharges of a sea of pinkish-yellow, foul-smelling muck spurting up from the local manholes.

Not believing my eyes nor my nose, I talked to the worker cleaning up the mess. Somehow, he managed to take it in stride.

What's been going on out here this morning?

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, I've just got a little foam in the street.

**GREG BARRON:** Well, how did this all happen?

**SPEAKER 1:** It's kind of something-- normally happens all the time. It's just the sewer kind of backs up a little bit. Just some type of foam forms and just kind of blows the manhole cover off.

**GREG BARRON:** And it actually blew that manhole cover off?

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, it has been known to lift it a couple of feet in the air sometimes, yeah.

**GREG BARRON:** Is that right? Well, describe this foam.

**SPEAKER 1:** It's just a heavy white-gray or white and kind of gold colored foam. Just kind of comes out.

**GREG BARRON:** What have you been-- you've been out here sweeping it off the street.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah. Just kind of squeegeeing it off, yeah.

**GREG BARRON:** How much of it was there?

**SPEAKER 1:** Not a heck of a lot out this time. It kind of dissipates after a little while.

**GREG BARRON:** Well, now, how often does this happen anyway?

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, a couple of times a week. And maybe sometimes it goes for a couple of weeks without happening. So.

**GREG BARRON:** Well, isn't this kind of dangerous, a manhole cover coming up like that?

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, I suppose it might be, yeah. I don't know. I really can't say much about it though. Just told to go down and do it. It's part of our job, I guess, to come down and take care of it. That's about all really to say about it, you know?

**GREG BARRON:** It turns out that the problem is caused by waste discharge from a nearby building, and city officials are working with the company to find a solution. It should be said too that company officials say the manhole lids have never actually blown off but usually only ooze away. The sight of the crud, though, leaves a lasting impression.

Well, what did the foamy stuff look like? Describe it.

**SPEAKER 2:** I can't. It was awful. It smelled even worse. And the cars were going through it and splashing it all over the road and the people in the streets.

[POPPING, BUBBLING]

With ooze on my feet, this is Greg Barron.

[POPPING, BUBBLING CONTINUE]