City of Norwalk

Sewer Policy

Residential and commercial sewer lines are the sole responsibility of the property/ business owner. Owners are responsible for the lateral line beginning at the property to the point of connection to the City main line, which is located in the street or the right of way. This includes sections of the lateral line that may be under the City sidewalks, curbs, or streets.

In the event of a blockage in the lateral line, the owners are responsible for determining the cause and clearing the blockage of the line between the building and the City' s sewer line. The City is not responsible for determining the cause of, or clearing the blockage of a residential/business lateral line.

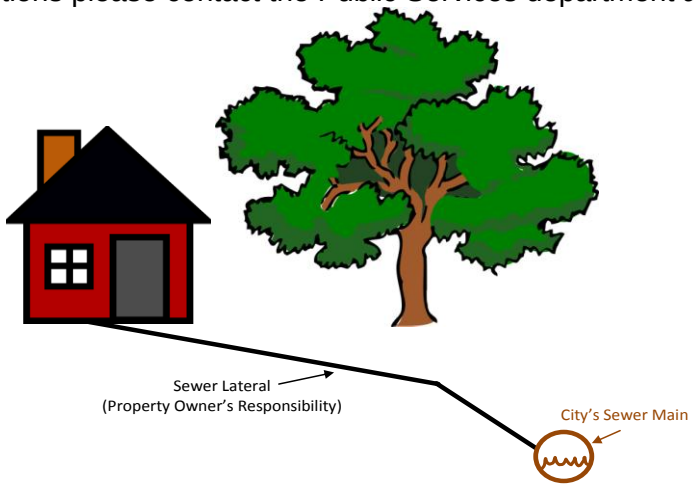
Property owners should periodically inspect the sewer line before there are symptoms of trouble, to avoid costly major repairs. A thorough video inspection of the sewer lateral line will reveal debris blockage, root intrusion, low spots, cracked or deteriorating piping, and cracked, separated or leaking pipe joints. The depth and exact location of problem areas can be identified to keep your repair cost down. Access to the sewer house lateral can be gained through a properly installed 4-inch clean out at the outlet of your home.

The City recommends cleaning the sewer lateral line through a 4-inch clean-out directly installed in the sewer lateral. A 4-inch clean-out is necessary to get the largest cutting blade and most debris removed from inside pipe.

If you discover facts that determine the damage to your sewer lateral was initially caused by a City-owned tree, you may file a claim with the City; however, you must follow the claim filing procedure to ensure that your request provides the best available information in its review consideration. In submitting a claim, take into account that the City does not pay for the replacement of undamaged pipe sections, or system upgrades including clean-outs or backflow valves. If the property owner believes a City owned tree has caused the problem, the owner should contact the City with evidence of such cause.

The City does not remove trees for sewer issues. Removing a tree or shrubbery will not solve the issue, as existing roots from surrounding vegetation can still enter a broken sewer lateral. If you decide to remove a City owned tree, you must follow the City tree trimming and removal permit process; including the replanting of a new tree as a replacement of the removed tree. Please see reverse side for tree removal policy and standard requirements.

If you have any questions please contact the Public Services department at: (562) 929-5511



Per City of Norwalk Urban Forest Management Plan adopted by City Council on November 18, 2014