



Understanding Sewer Laterals

What Is A Sewer Lateral?

A sewer lateral is the pipe that connects all the sinks, drains and toilets in your home or building to the City sewer main, which is usually located in the City's right-of-way (street). The entire length of the sewer lateral, extending from your home or building to its point of connection with the City sewer main underneath the street, is your private property.

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Sewer Department Contacts:

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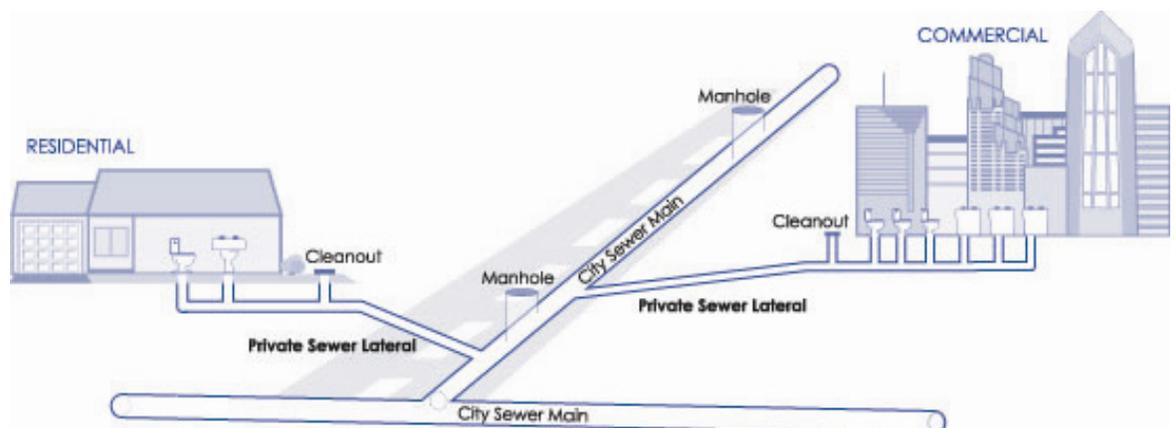
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Maintenance Is The Property Owner's Responsibility

It is your responsibility as a property owner to maintain your sewer lateral. Proper maintenance includes keeping your lateral clean and clear of any obstruction, such as roots, grease and debris. The level, type and frequency of maintenance required is highly dependent on the age and type of lateral (e.g., plastic vs. cast iron) and the practices of the building occupants. Newer, plastic laterals with intact joints and seals may function for years without problems. Older laterals of concrete, clay or cast iron may have root intrusion or deteriorated sections and require regular inspection and/or more frequent cleaning.

Minimizing Lateral Problems

Drainage problems are commonly caused by obstruction or blockage in the lateral. You can minimize or eliminate such problems by being careful of what you dispose of in your drains and garbage disposals and what you flush down the toilet. Fats, oils and grease (FOG) can clog laterals and eventually block the sewer mains.



If a Problem Occurs

If your drains start to run slowly, there's a good chance you have some sort of obstruction in your lateral. A licensed plumber or drain-cleaning specialist should be able to clear the obstruction. If the lateral is broken, you will have to repair the lateral. In general, problems with your lateral are your responsibility as the property owner. All city related problems with sewer laterals must be inspected by city staff upon initial discovery. Please contact the Community Services at 404-669-2120 before covering up any repaired sewer lateral.