



## **Public Information Handout**

### **Sewer Lateral Maintenance Policy**

#### **Sewer Backup**

Sewer backup may be caused by a blockage within the mainline, which is buried either beneath the street or within the backyard, or by a blockage in the property owner's sewer lateral, which connects the dwelling to the City's mainline. When sewer backups or stoppages are experienced, we encourage the resident to contact the Public Works Department first by calling (530) 757-5686 to possibly avoid unnecessary sewer maintenance or repair expenses. Depending on whether the Public Works Department is contacted first, whether the mainline is in the street or the backyard, and the location of the blockage, the following conditions will apply:

- 1) Resident Contacts the City First at (530) 757-5686
  - a) City staff will check records to determine whether the mainline is in the street or in the backyard.
  - b) City staff will respond and determine the location of the blockage.
  - c) In situations where the mainline is buried beneath the street and there is an existing service lateral cleanout, refer to Figure 1; the City will also inspect the service lateral portion of the sewer lateral. If the problem is in the mainline or service lateral, as shown in Figure 1, the City will clear, repair or replace the pipe, as needed, to resolve the problem. If the blockage is within the building lateral portion of the sewer lateral, the resident will then need to make arrangements to have the problem resolved by a private plumbing contractor.
  - d) In situations where the City's mainline is buried within the backyard, refer to Figure 2, and the blockage is within the sewer lateral, the resident will need to make arrangements to have the problem resolved.
- 2) Resident or Property Owner Engages Private Plumbing Contractor
  - a) Once a private Contractor is on site and has initiated work, the City cannot subsequently clear the service lateral portion of the sewer lateral.
  - b) Contractor is required to clear the entire sewer lateral.
    - i) If the mainline is in the street, the Contractor is required to clear the blockage(s) through to the mainline sewer in the street.
      - (1) In the event that the Contractor is unable to clear the blockage from the service lateral portion (refer to Figure 1) of the sewer lateral, the City must be contacted to witness further cleaning efforts. The service lateral cleanout is

not to be accessed unless City personnel are on-site. Damage resulting from unauthorized access to the service lateral cleanout will be assessed to the property owner, or agent.

- ii) If the mainline is in the street and there is no existing service lateral cleanout, the Contractor is required to clear the blockage(s) through to the mainline sewer in the street.
  - (1) In the event that the Contractor is initially unable to clear the blockage from the service lateral portion of the sewer lateral, the City should be contacted to witness further cleaning efforts.
  - (2) If the Contractor is still unable to clear the blockage from the service lateral portion, the Contractor will need to determine the alignment of the sewer lateral and expose the point at which the building lateral portion connects to the service lateral.
  - (3) With the point of connection of the building lateral and service lateral exposed the City will proceed to clear, repair or replace the pipe, as needed.
  - (4) The property owner, or their agent, will be required to obtain a reconnection inspection permit prior to reconnecting the building lateral to the improved service lateral and subsequently inspected by the City prior to closing the excavation.
- iii) If the mainline is in the backyard, the Contractor is required to clear, repair or replace the pipe, as needed, to resolve the problem.
  - (1) In the event that the backyard sewer lateral is replaced at the point of connecting (at the fitting) to the mainline, the property owner will be required to obtain a reconnection inspection permit prior to reconnecting the sewer lateral to the mainline.

### **Property Owner's Responsibility**

The owner of the property is responsible for maintaining their sewer lateral from the building lateral to the mainline sewer; refer to Figure 1, Front Yard Easement and Figure 2, Backyard Easement. Locating the building sewer lateral and its connection to the service lateral for a front yard easement or the mainline for a backyard easement is the owner's responsibility. Although we will attempt to assist with available records and information, we suggest the property owner employ a private contractor to maintain their sewer lateral.

#### **Front Yard Sewer Laterals**

If the sewer lateral experiences a stoppage and there is no service lateral cleanout and/or no information on the location of the service lateral cleanout (as shown in Figure 1) the property owner is responsible for clearing stoppages and maintaining the sewer lateral to the mainline (see Figure 1).

### Back Yard Sewer Laterals

If the sewer lateral experiences a stoppage, the property owner is responsible in all cases for clearing stoppages and maintaining their sewer lateral from the building to the mainline sewer, refer to Figure 2.

Note: When City sanitary sewer service is provided from other than a public right-of-way the sanitary sewer does not have or require a service lateral, cleanouts such as depicted in Figure 2: Back Yard Easement.

### Defective Service Lateral

If the contractor is unable to clear a stoppage in the service lateral portion of the sewer lateral (refer to Figure 1), as witnessed by City staff, due to a defect and there is not a service lateral cleanout or no information on a location of a cleanout, the contractor must expose the end of the service lateral one (1) foot to four (4) feet back of easement or property line, as appropriate. The City will not perform sewer service work on private property except within a public utility easement.

## **City Sewer Lateral Service**

### Service Lateral Cleanout Installation

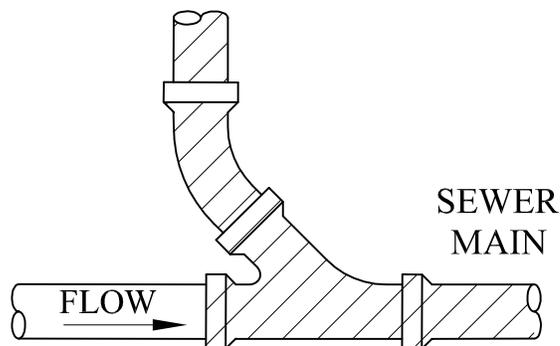
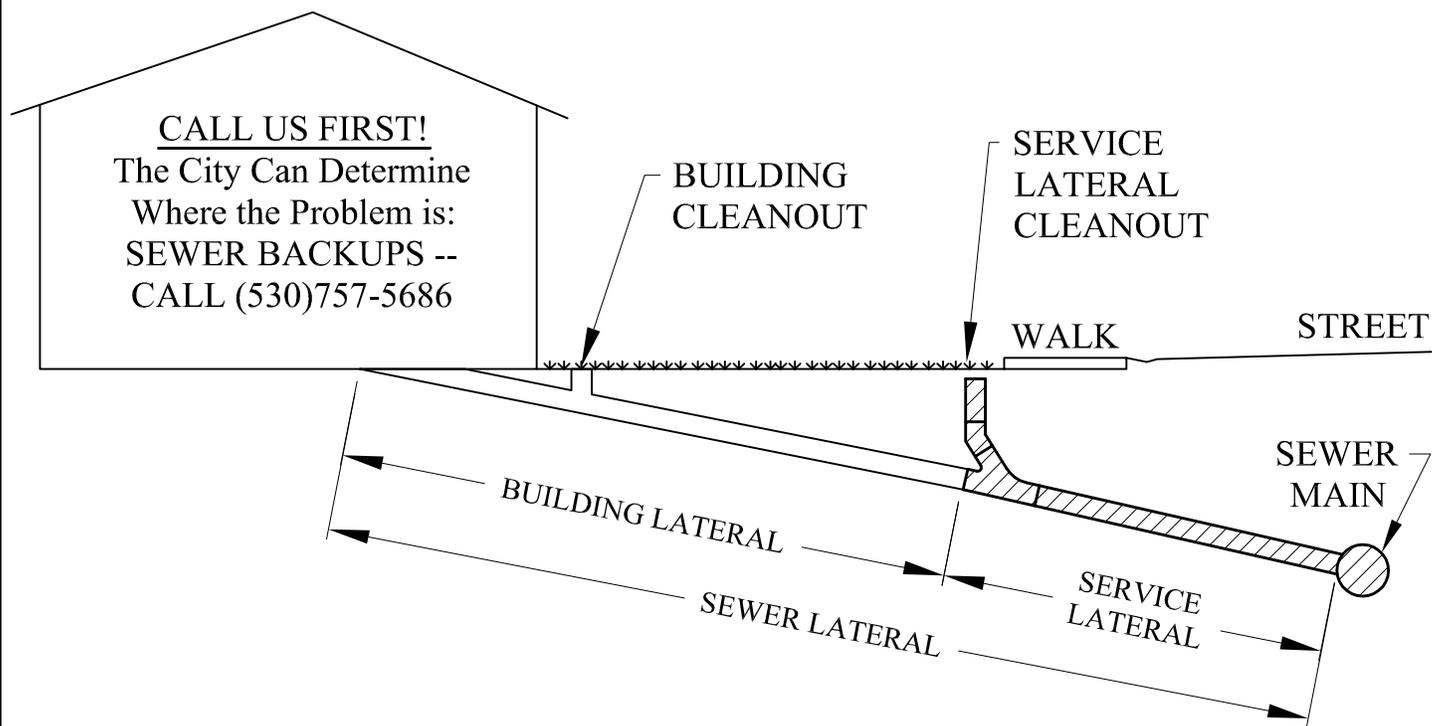
If a contractor is unable to clear a stoppage in the service lateral portion of the sewer lateral, as witnessed by City staff, and excavates to expose the end of the service lateral because there is no service lateral cleanout, the City will install a service lateral cleanout to facilitate future City sanitary sewer service maintenance. The property owner, or their agent, is required to obtain a reconnection inspection permit and have the work inspected before the excavation is closed.

### **Limit of City Responsibility**

The City will not assume responsibility for work on private property. Claims for damage resulting from sewage backup due to stoppages in the sewer mainline or from backflow associated with a double wye installation to an adjacent property will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Note: Although there is no additional charge for city maintenance service, which is financed through sewer service fees, the City will not assume the cost of your plumber's call regardless of the location of the stoppage.

# **FIGURE 1: FRONT YARD SEWER LATERAL**



THE CITY OF DAVIS SANITARY SEWER IS  
INDICATED BY THE CROSS-HATCHED AREA.

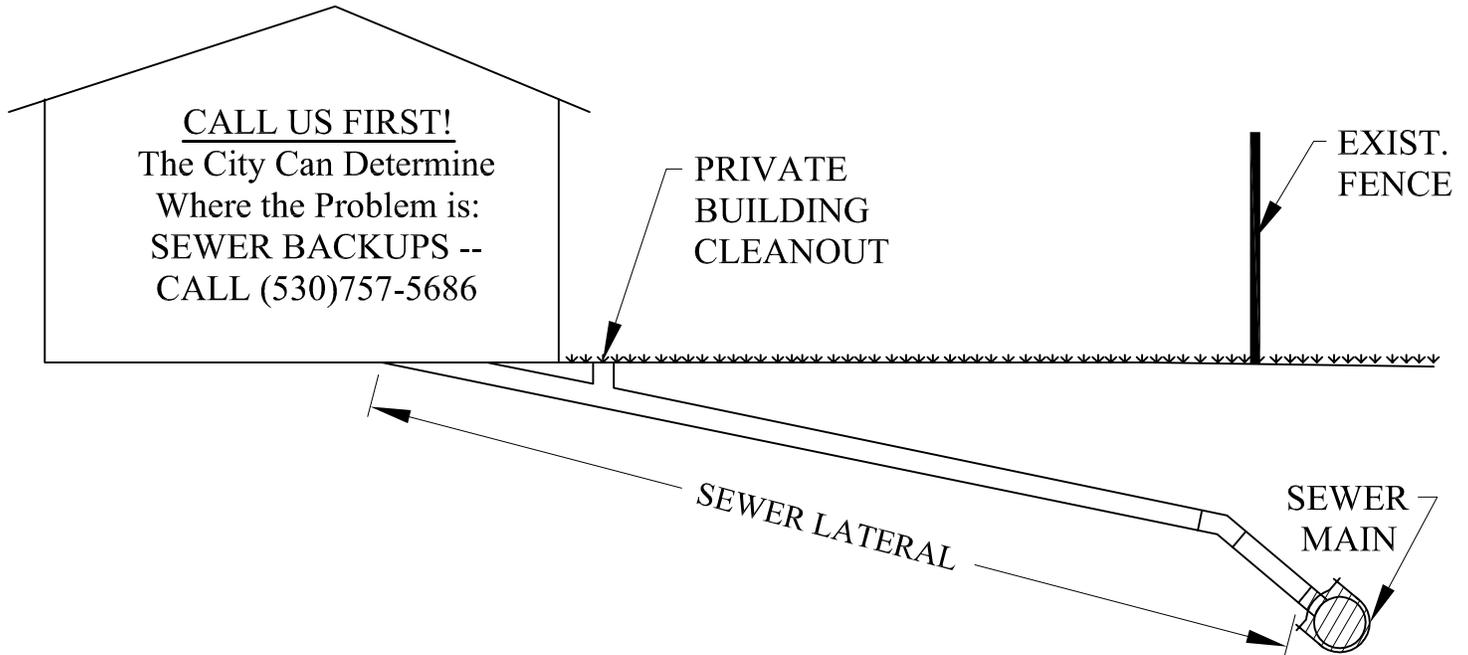
**SEWER LATERAL  
RIGHT-OF-WAY SERVICE**



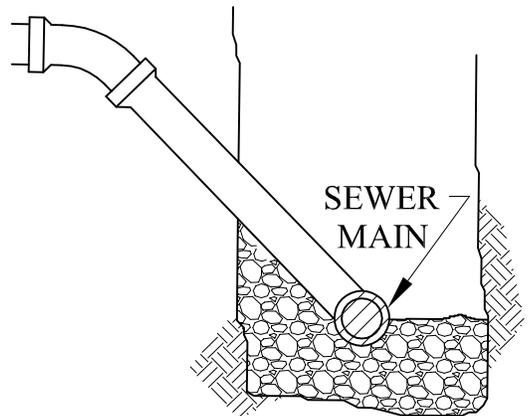
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APRIL 2007

# **FIGURE 2: BACK YARD SEWER LATERAL**

## PROPERTY OWNER'S BACKYARD



THE CITY OF DAVIS SANITARY SEWER IS INDICATED BY THE CROSS-HATCHED AREA ON THE SKETCH.



NOTE:  
THE CITY DOES NOT HAVE A SERVICE CLEANOUT NOR SERVICE LATERAL IN A BACKYARD SEWER MAIN ALIGNMENT.

**SEWER LATERAL  
EASEMENT SERVICE**



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