



# Sewer Lateral Maintenance for Property Owners

## What is a Sewer Lateral?

A sewer lateral is a pipe that transports wastewater from all of the drains of a residence or building to the City sewer main. Sewer laterals are privately-owned and maintained by the property owner.

## Property Owner's Responsibility

Per section 13.20.070 of the City of Morgan Hill Municipal Code, each property owner shall, at the property owner's expense, inspect, maintain in good working order; repair and replace, as necessary, the private sewer lateral so that it does not cause or contribute to any sewage overflow from either the private sewer lateral or the public sewer. The private sewer lateral shall be free of displaced joints, open joint, root intrusion, substantial deterioration of the line, cracks, leaks, inflow, infiltration of extraneous water, fats, oils and grease, sediment deposit or any other similar conditions, defects or obstructions likely to cause or contribute to blockage of the private sewer lateral or the public sewer.



## Maintaining Your Sewer Lateral

Everything that is put down a private drain reaches the City sewer. A private sewer lateral which is not properly maintained can cause raw sewage to back up within the residence/building and within the City's sewer system. Unmaintained, cracked, or damaged private sewer laterals can be a contributing cause of Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs). Because both storm drains (which transport rain water and irrigation run off) and sanitary sewers are commonplace throughout the City, overflows from the sanitary sewer can readily reach the storm drains causing sewage to flow into streams, rivers, bays, and eventually the ocean.

Your private sewer lateral should be maintained such that it is free of any roots, grease deposits, and other solids which may obstruct the flow. Do not pour fats, oils, or grease down the kitchen drain. Do not dispose of wipes, feminine hygiene products, paper towels, Q-tips, or diapers in the toilet or sink. Be conscious of where you are planting trees because growing roots can cause damage to sewer laterals.

A plumber can be hired annually to make sure private sewer laterals are clean and free from built up waste. Property owners are encouraged to inspect their private sewer lateral upon transfer (buy or sell) of property and then at least every three to five years thereafter to determine if there are any problems or blockages in the sewer lateral.

## For More Information

If you have further questions to your responsibility for maintaining your property's sewer lateral please contact the City of Morgan Hill Utilities Division at (408) 776-7333 or visit the City's website at:

[www.morgan-hill.ca.gov/1708/Sewer-Lateral](http://www.morgan-hill.ca.gov/1708/Sewer-Lateral)