

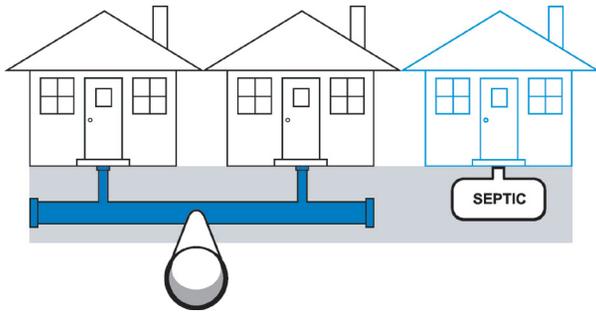
Who pays for the cleanup?

Cleanup is the owner's responsibility, and may be covered by the homeowner's insurance policy. If the backup is caused by the public sewer system, the City of Forest Grove may pay the cleanup costs. For more information, please contact the City of Forest Grove at (503) 992-3258.

Cleanup and repair costs vary, so to protect yourself from unreasonable costs and poor workmanship: check references; contact the Better Business Bureau; and, get written bids from more than one contractor.

What about septic tanks?

The City of Forest Grove is not involved with septic tank systems. We can assist if you are interested in connecting to the public sanitary sewer system.



Questions?

Please call the City of Forest Grove at (503) 992-3258.



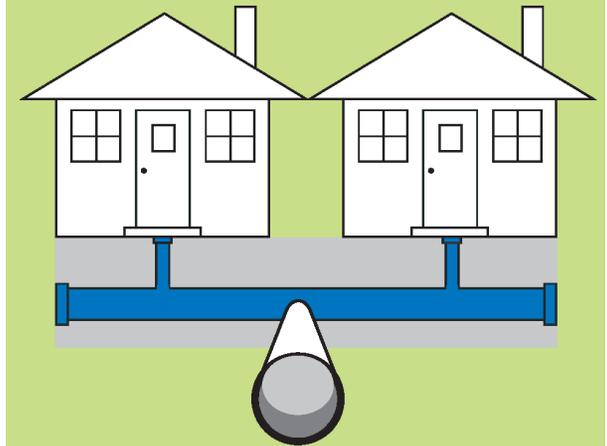
A place where businesses and families thrive.

Public Works
2551-A 23rd Avenue
Forest Grove, Oregon 97116
(503) 992-3258
www.forestgrove-or.gov

Sewer Repairs on Private Property

What to do when your sewer backs up

If your home or business is connected to the public sanitary sewer system, your wastewater runs through a "lateral" pipe to the public system. This pamphlet offers tips for when the lateral needs repair.



A place where businesses and families thrive.

What causes sewer backups?

Build up of grease and debris, tree roots, and collapsed or deteriorated pipes.

Tip: *don't put fats, oils and grease down the drain.*



Help—my sewer is blocked!

If you can't fix it, call a plumber or sewer cleaning service.

Before help arrives, you can remove the cleanout cap to direct the overflow outside. If you do this, be sure to clean up any sewage that is released outside.

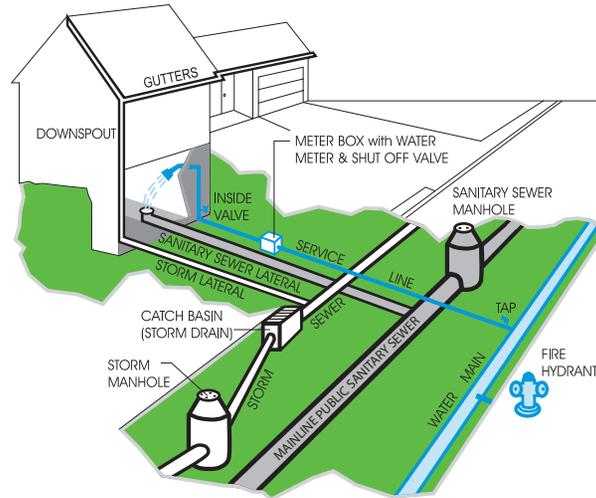
Tip: *Know where the cleanout cap is located. Usually, it is near the lowest point of the plumbing system and just outside the building.*

Sewer repair

Most sewer backups are caused by blockages in the plumbing. Sometimes, the pipe that connects the building's plumbing to the public sewer system needs to be cleaned or repaired. That pipe is called the lateral, or side sewer, and is the owner's responsibility. A plumber or sewer service can inspect with a video camera and show you the exact location of the problem.

The property owner is responsible for any repair within the building or the lateral pipe. However,

the City of Forest Grove will offer to repair the lateral **if** the blockage is due to a structural defect within the public street right of way **and** the owner provides video proof of the location of the problem. [A structural defect is defined as: cracked, broken or crushed pipe, open or offset joints, root intrusion, or other imperfections in a lateral that may allow surface or groundwater to enter the sanitary sewer system.]



Who pays for what?

The owner is responsible for maintenance and repairs of the building's plumbing and the lateral that connects to the public sewer mainline. The City of Forest Grove is responsible for the public sanitary sewer system, and is willing to repair structural defects in the lateral under the street to protect the public system.

Property Owner Responsibility

1. Service and repairs within the building, and initial effort to unplug the lateral
2. Video of lateral to identify the problem and location
3. Service and repair of the lateral (except for structural damage in the street)

City of Forest Grove Responsibility

1. Maintenance and repair of the mainline public sewer
2. Repair of a lateral in the street if it has a structural defect

Can I repair the lateral?

Yes, but you must have a plumbing permit and call for a utility "locate" before digging. Contact your city or county building department for the permit and call 1 (800) 332-2344 for the utility locate. These rules protect your safety and may spare costly mistakes.

The City of Forest Grove cannot pay for or reimburse work done by owners or their contractors.

If the City of Forest Grove will repair the lateral

If the City of Forest Grove has agreed to repair the lateral, we will start shortly after the required utility location is done—generally, a two day wait, and do the work during normal business hours.