



CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ENGINEERING DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Laurel L. Prussing and Members of the City Council
FROM: William R. Gray, Public Works Director
Gale L. Jamison, Assistant City Engineer
Bradley M. Bennett, Civil Engineer
DATE: February 21, 2013
RE: Revision to Reimbursement Program for the Repair of Sewer Laterals

Introduction

Ordinance 2007-12-138, approved on December 17, 2007, established a reimbursement program for property owners for the cost of sewer lateral repairs located under City streets and sidewalks. The reimbursement program was intended to ease the financial burden for property owners who have to remove and replace a City street, alley, or sidewalk to repair their sewer service laterals. The percentage of City reimbursement was set at 50% (up to a maximum amount of \$3,000) for public street, alley, or sidewalk removal and replacement costs for a sewer lateral repair.

Twenty four properties have participated in the sewer lateral reimbursement program since 2008 with a total of almost \$ 45,000 being reimbursed to property owners for sewer lateral repairs.

Ordinance 2007-12-138 also established a reimbursement program for properties that had their sanitary sewer laterals illegally connected to the storm sewer system. The illegal connection reimbursement program was intended to ease the financial burden for property owners who have to reroute their illegal connections to a sanitary sewer. Six properties have participated in the illegal connection reimbursement program since 2008 with a total of almost \$ 20,000 being reimbursed to property owners for eliminating illegal connections to the storm sewer system.

Based on recent public input and direction provided by the Mayor and City Council, the attached ordinance recommends the following:

- Increasing the limit of maximum reimbursement by the City from \$3,000 to \$4,500 for sewer lateral repairs.
- Increasing the percentage of City reimbursement from 50% to 75% for public street, alley, or sidewalk removal and replacement for sewer lateral repairs.
- Maintaining the current percentage and maximum reimbursement amount for the illegal connection program at a 50% reimbursement and \$4,000 maximum reimbursement.

- Implementing the date when the increase in the maximum reimbursement and reimbursement percentage will be effective, which will be the date that the attached ordinance is signed.

Fiscal Impact

The Sewer Benefit Tax was increased on July 1, 2008 to cover the budgeted expense of \$42,000 for the 50% reimbursement program. The largest annual distribution of reimbursement funds has been just under \$15,000 so there are sufficient revenues available to cover the increased maximum reimbursement amount and percentage increase. No increase in the Sewer Benefit Tax is required for the increase in the reimbursement limit and reimbursement percentage.

Table 1 Sewer Lateral Reimbursement Program Participation

Year	Number of Participants	Reimbursement Funds Distributed
2008	3	\$ 7,353.11
2009	1	\$ 1,767.80
2010	6	\$10,218.10
2011	5	\$10,792.96
2012	9	\$14,812.01
Totals	24	\$44,943.98

Public Outreach Efforts

The Engineering Division has created an informational tri-fold brochure on sewer back-ups to be distributed to property owners experiencing sewer related problems per Council's recommendation from the January 28, 2012 Committee of the Whole Meeting. Included in the brochure is information on the City's reimbursement program for sewer lateral repairs and the emergency grant program administered by the Community Development Department. Information on the cured-in-place pipe lining and pipe bursting technologies is also included in the brochure. A copy of the brochure is attached.

The Engineer Division proposes to have City sewer maintenance staff distribute the brochures whenever responding to a sewer back-up. The Engineering Division will also mail a copy of the brochure to all properties that submit a right-of-way permit application for sewer excavation, provide copies of the brochure to the City Plumbing Inspector to be distributed to property owners with sewer related plumbing issues and post the brochure on the City's website for the public to access.

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the attached ordinance revising the maximum reimbursement amount and percentage for repair of sewer service laterals under City streets, alleys, or sidewalks be approved.

ORDINANCE NO. 2013-02-016

**AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 2007-12-138 AND ESTABLISHING
A COST REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR REPAIR OF ILLEGAL CONNECTIONS OF
PRIVATE SANITARY SEWER SERVICE LATERALS TO THE STORM SEWER SYSTEM
AND REPAIR OF PRIVATELY-OWNED SANITARY AND STORM SEWER SERVICE
LATERALS**

WHEREAS, the repair of a privately-owned sanitary and storm sewer service lateral may require the removal and replacement of sidewalks, alleys, and streets within City right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the City Council heretofore did on the 28th day of December 2007, pursuant to Ordinance No. 2007-12-138, approve a Council policy regarding a reimbursement program for illegal connections of private sanitary sewer service laterals to the storm sewer system and repair of sanitary and storm sewer service laterals; and

WHEREAS, after due and proper consideration, the City Council finds that the best interests of the City are served by repealing Ordinance No. 2007-12-138 and by establishing a cost reimbursement policy for repair of illegal connections of private sanitary sewer service laterals to the storm sewer system and repair of privately-owned sanitary and storm sewer service laterals as described herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois, as follows:

Section 1.

Ordinance No. 2007-12-138 is hereby repealed upon the effective date of this Ordinance. The repeal of such Ordinance shall not abrogate or affect any act committed or done or any penalty or forfeiture incurred or any pending litigation or prosecution under such repealed Ordinance.

Section 2.

In place of said Ordinance herein repealed, the City Council hereby establishes a cost reimbursement policy for repair of illegal connections of private sanitary sewer service laterals to the storm sewer system and repair of privately-owned sanitary and storm sewer service laterals in accordance with the following requirements:

A. If an illegal sanitary sewer connection to the storm sewer system is found in a City right-of-way, the City shall reimburse the property owner up to four thousand dollars (\$4,000) or fifty percent (50%), whichever is lower, of the reasonable costs of materials, equipment, and labor involved in the removal and repairs to alley or street pavement and sidewalk and necessary backfill to effectuate such removal and replacement.

B. If private sanitary sewer lateral repairs are required in a City right-

of-way, the City shall reimburse the property owner up to four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500) or seventy-five percent (75%), whichever is lower, of the reasonable costs of materials, equipment, and labor involved in the removal and repairs to alley or street pavement and sidewalk and necessary backfill to effectuate such removal and replacement.

- C. Reimbursement is limited to one time for any sanitary or storm sewer service lateral.
- D. The City's reimbursement obligation shall cease immediately and without the requirement of further payment if in any fiscal year the City Council fails to appropriate or otherwise make available funds for this policy.
- E. The Public Works director shall develop such written requirements as may be necessary to implement this policy, which shall be effective upon approval of the City Council.
- F. The Public Works director shall have sole authority to determine eligibility for reimbursement, prioritization of requests, and compliance with this policy. Any appeal of decisions of the Public Works director shall be made to the Mayor; and the Mayor shall be the final authority.

Section 3.

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage.

This Ordinance is hereby passed by the affirmative vote, the "ayes" and "nays" being called, of a majority of the members of the Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, at a meeting of said Council.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL this ____ day of _____, _____.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINED:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR this ____ day of _____, _____.

Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

**A POLICY REGARDING ILLEGAL CONNECTIONS OF PRIVATE SANITARY SEWER
SERVICE LATERALS TO THE STORM SEWER SYSTEM AND REPAIRS TO
SANITARY AND STORM SEWER SERVICE LATERALS**

A. Basic Policy Statement. Connection of private sanitary sewer service laterals to the storm sewer system is prohibited by the City's Illegal Discharge and Connection Ordinance. The City recognizes the extraordinary costs of eliminating an illegal sanitary sewer connection to the storm sewer system. The City also recognizes the extraordinary costs to repair a sanitary or storm sewer service lateral under a City street or sidewalk.

B. Notice to City. Upon discovery of an illegal private sanitary sewer service lateral connection to the storm sewer or repair of a sanitary or storm sewer service lateral requiring the disturbance of sidewalks, alleys, and streets, the property owner shall notify the City's Public Works Department, Engineering Division, in a timely fashion.

C. Arrangements. The property owner shall make arrangements with an appropriate contractor to remove the illegal connection or repair the service lateral. The property owner shall submit a paid receipt or invoice from the plumbing or sewer contractor that performed the work to the City along with the City's application form for the reimbursement program. The paid receipt or invoice shall contain detailed costs for the removal and replacement of publicly owned infrastructure (sidewalks, curbs, alleys, or streets).

D. Costs.

1. **ILLEGAL CONNECTIONS.** The property owner shall be responsible for the initial payment of all costs of eliminating the illegal connection of their sanitary sewer service lateral to the storm sewer system within City right-of-way. The City shall reimburse the property owner for fifty percent (50%) of the cost up to four thousand dollars (\$4,000) of actual costs upon submission of reasonable supporting information. The City Engineer's determination of the reasonable supporting information and reasonable cost of construction shall be determinative of the City's reimbursement irrespective of the cost actually incurred by the property owner.

2. **REPAIR.** The property owner shall be responsible for the initial payment of all costs for the repair of a sanitary or storm sewer service connection. If construction is required in City right-of-way, the City shall, upon submission of reasonable supporting information, reimburse to the property owner to seventy-five percent (75%) of the reasonable costs of materials and labor involved in the removal and repairs to alley or street pavement, curb, and sidewalk and necessary backfill to effectuate such removal and replacement up to four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500). The City Engineer's determination of the reasonable supporting information and a reasonable cost of construction shall be determinative of the City's reimbursement irrespective of the cost actually incurred by the property owner.

E. Eligibility. The property must be located within the corporate limits of the City of Urbana. The City will reimburse where:

1. The private sanitary sewer service lateral is illegally connected into the storm sewer system.

2. Repair is needed within City right-of-way and the required repairs disturb the alley or street pavement, or sidewalk.

F. Funding. All funds for reimbursement under this policy shall come from the Sewer Benefit Tax's Sanitary Sewer Construction Fund or Stormwater Utility Fee.

G. Retroactivity. This policy shall cover illegal connections discovered or eliminated beginning on May 1, 2007. This policy shall cover sanitary and storm lateral repairs beginning on March 5, 2013. No retroactivity is provided for sanitary or storm sewer lateral repairs.

H. Effective Date. This policy shall take effect upon passage of a motion establishing this council policy.

What to do if you have a back-up

Call the City first at 217-384-2342. In some cases, your sanitary back-up can be due to City sewers being blocked or surcharged. If the contents of your lateral have nowhere to go, it will fill your plumbing and eventually come back out of your lowest drains. If City sewer mains are open and running, your next step will be to call a sewer cleaning contractor.

If your lateral can not be cleaned, then your contractor may need to televise the pipe with a camera. You should request that they make a recording of the televising on a CD or DVD. If a recording is not possible you should be present for the televising. City Staff would be happy to review the recording with you to verify any recommendations made by your contractor.

A few things to remember if any extra work is recommended....

ALWAYS get two or more estimates of work needed to be done. You are not obligated to hire the current contractor for their recommended work. The cost of work and what work is recommended can vary significantly between contractors.

Ask questions - Understand what they are doing and why. Still not clear? Call the Engineering Division at 217-384-2342.

Know your options - Pipe bursting, lateral lining and underground boring are all possible methods that may be more cost effective alternatives to open trench cutting depending on your situation.

Be aware of scope of work in the contract, grading and seeding are typically not part of it. You may be left with a mound of dirt to settle over time unless those costs are included.

Sewer Repair Funding



Urbana has two programs to assist property owners with the cost of sewer repairs.

1. **Pavement Reimbursement Program-**

All properties are eligible and there are no income limits for the program. The City will reimburse a property owner 75% (up to a maximum reimbursement of \$4,500) of the cost for pavement removal and replacement for city streets, alleys, and sidewalks. Information on the program and application forms are available at http://urbanaininois.us/Sewer_Lateral_Reimbursement_Program

2. **Emergency Grant Program-**

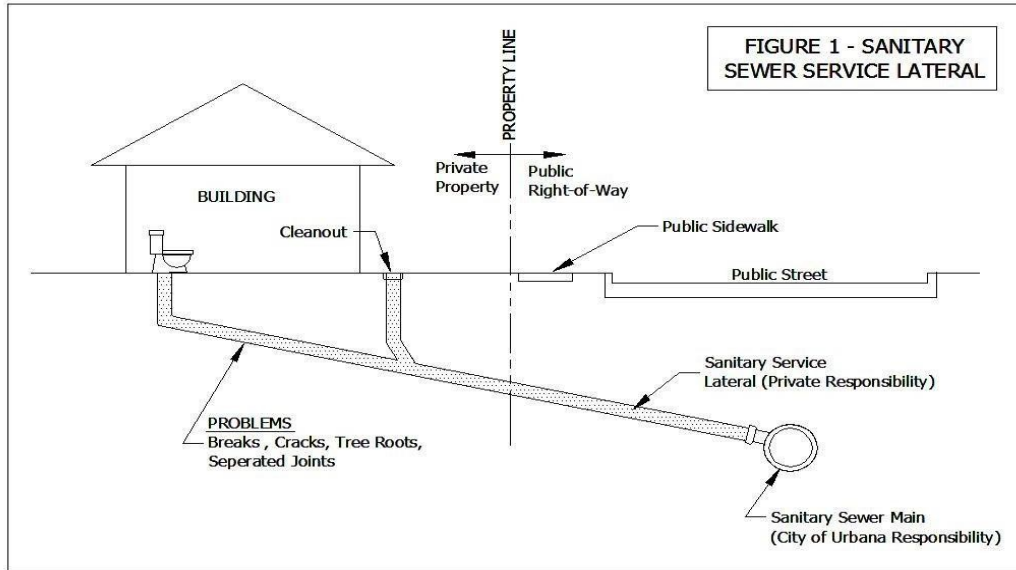
This program is available to income qualifying homeowners for emergency home repairs including sewer laterals. Maximum funding per household through the emergency grant program is \$5,000. For additional information on the emergency grant program see <http://urbanaininois.us/residents/grant-funding/home-improvement-programs-0>

What To Do If You Have a Sewer Back-up

City of Urbana Public Works



Plumbing Fixtures Not Draining? Call Us First!



What's The Problem?

Sewer back-ups can be caused by a variety of reasons: collapsed pipes, tree roots, surcharged public sewer mains, storm water infiltration, grease, paper products and other objects can all be possible culprits of pipes not draining properly. If you have a recurring problem with tree roots or grease you might want to consider a long term maintenance plan.

Basement flooding? Our overhead sewer program provides funding to reduce back-ups from the city owned sewer main. For additional information on the City's overhead sewer program please see http://www.urbanaininois.us/Sewer_Back-Ups.

Think Safety First!

Stop using plumbing and appliances that drain to the sewer.
Safely turn off electricity before entering affected areas.
Enter flooded areas with caution.
Avoid direct contact with sewage and contaminated items.
Be careful not to track contaminants to other areas.

Clean Up Safely!

Use rubber gloves and boots, disinfect contaminated surfaces and be wary of porous materials such as dry-wall and carpet.
Consider consulting a professional water damage service.

Is water coming back up through your drains? Call us first!

Monday - Friday 7:30am - 5:00pm 217-384-2342

After Normal Work Hours 217-384-2320
(Police Department Non-Emergency Line)

Helpful Link

Sanitary Sewer Back-up Information Web Page

http://www.urbanaininois.us/Sewer_Back-Ups

Always remember... You can call us if you have any questions at any point in the process; before, during or after the work is finished.

**City of Urbana
Public Works Department
Engineering Division
706 S Glover Ave
Urbana, Illinois 61802
Phone: 217-384-2342
Fax: 217-384-2400**