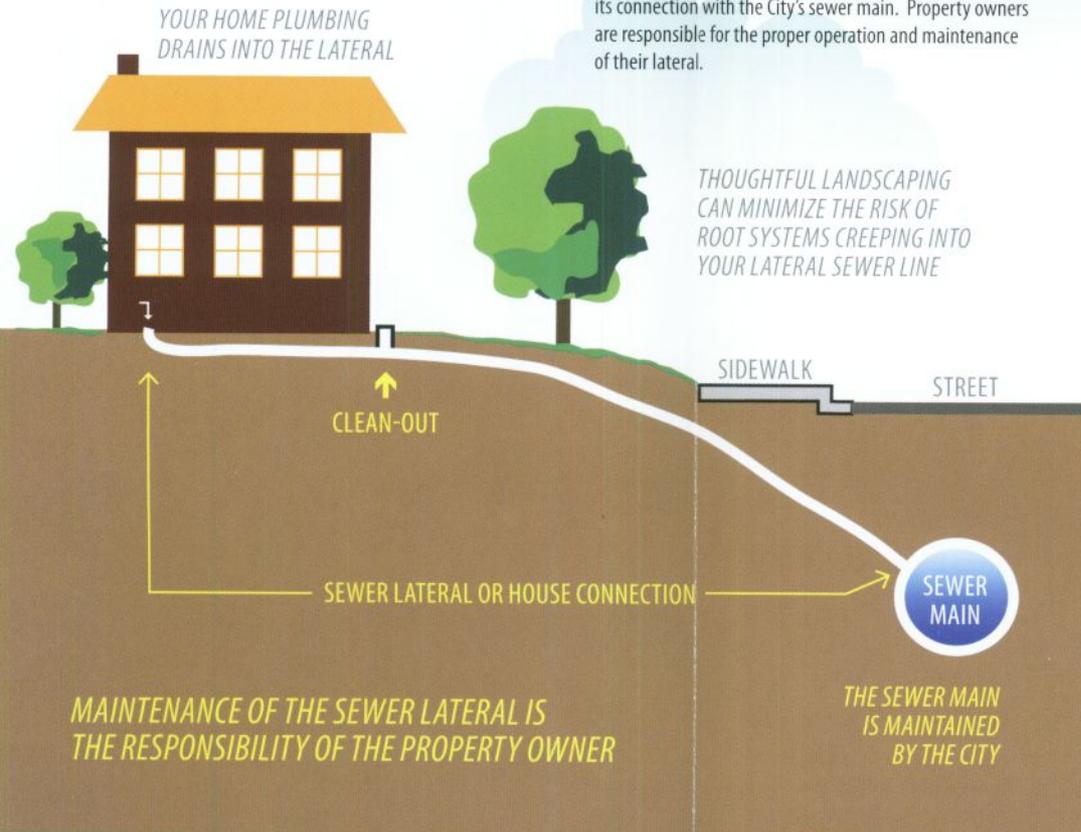


TYPICAL HOME SEWER CONNECTION

WHAT IS A LATERAL?

The City of South Pasadena operates and maintains its own wastewater collection system. An important contributor to our system is a network of private laterals. Laterals are small underground sewer pipes, sometimes called sewer service lines (usually four inches in diameter) that carry wastewater from homes and businesses to the public sewer in the street. If you own your home, you also own the lateral from the end of your property's internal plumbing to its connection with the City's sewer main. Property owners are responsible for the proper operation and maintenance of their lateral.

THOUGHTFUL LANDSCAPING CAN MINIMIZE THE RISK OF ROOT SYSTEMS CREEPING INTO YOUR LATERAL SEWER LINE



HOW DO I FIX A BLOCKED OR COLLAPSED LATERAL?

If you have a sewer backup or root intrusion problem, contact a licensed plumber or sewer contractor before deciding on a remedy. Consult the Yellow Pages under the heading "Sewer" or "Plumbing" for information on companies that perform CCTV pipe inspection and root control. It is always a good idea to get multiple quotes for any substantial amount of work.

Call the Public Works Department regarding overflows, backups or for any sewer related questions at (626) 403-7240.

WHAT CAUSES ROOTS TO GROW IN PIPES?

Roots are attracted to water and nutrients in sewage that escape through cracks or loose joints in sewer lines and laterals. This means roots will move towards and penetrate through cracks, loose joints or any openings in sewer pipes. This happens even in the winter when trees appear to be dormant. The main point is that **leaky laterals invite roots and roots cause blockages**.

Once inside, roots will continue to grow and fill the pipe to create a root mass, commonly referred to as a "root ball," which may become matted with grease, paper, and other solid matter. This root ball will eventually clog your lateral. Continued growth of the root ball in a private lateral can eventually affect the City's sewer system.

As roots continue to grow within a pipe, they begin to expand and exert pressure at their point of entry and throughout the pipe. This can result in a ruptured pipe. A ruptured sewer pipe can be costly to fix or replace.

Signs that a sewer is blocked include slow moving drains, gurgling sounds from a toilet bowl, and sewage coming up from a clean-out. A pipe that is not cleared will become completely blocked and may rupture.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN LATERALS?

The majority of all lateral blockage occurrences are from private homes. Your lateral is particularly susceptible to tree root intrusion, especially if it is over ten years old. About half of the roots in the City's sewer system enter through defective private laterals. Tree root intrusion can damage your lateral and cause it to collapse over time. Earthquakes and settlement of soils are sometimes the cause of cracking or separation of joints that allow roots to intrude on your lateral. Another common cause of lateral blockage is from excessive buildup of grease (a result of pouring cooking oil and fat down the kitchen sink). Properly maintaining your lateral will increase its useful life, help prevent sewage from backing into your home and **minimize Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs) into the streets, which lead into the storm drain system and into the Los Angeles River**. It will also help you to avoid early and costly bills to repair or replace your lateral. Moreover, failure to properly maintain your lateral may result in you being liable or responsible to your neighbors or the City for damages caused by your lateral.

The City maintains public sewers by periodically removing and clearing roots using mechanical equipment; systematically inspecting street sewers using Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) technology to identify structural defects; and by planning and implementing capital improvement projects to repair, rehabilitate or replace structurally deficient sewers.

It is important that property owners inspect, maintain, repair and/or replace private laterals to help reduce sewer overflow and protect private and public sewers from further damage.

