

The Bureau of Environmental Services works with Portland residents and businesses to protect water quality, public health, and the environment through wastewater collection and treatment, sewer construction and maintenance, stormwater management, and stream and watershed restoration.

Guidance for Property Owners with Suspected Nonconforming Sewer Connections

What to Ask for When You are Hiring a Plumber to Scope and Locate Your Property's Sewer Lateral

Hiring a licensed plumber to scope and locate your private sewer lateral is one of the best ways to find out if your property has a nonconforming sewer connection. This will determine the exact location of your lateral, how it's connected to the public sewer and the general condition of the pipe. It will also allow the city to determine conclusively if your property has a nonconforming sewer connection and will give you information needed to make any corrections to the line.

How to Hire a Licensed Plumber

When hiring a plumber, we encourage you to get at least three bids for the work. Ask friends and family for recommendations, and check with the Better Business Bureau before hiring anyone.

A sewer scope and locate generally costs between \$100 and \$300. The city does not recommend specific plumbing firms, but does maintain a list of plumbers that have attended a training session on City of Portland sewer connection requirements. Download the list at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/455516 or request a copy be sent to you.

What to Ask Your Plumber to Do

Tell your plumber that you might have a nonconforming sewer connection and you need to confirm what kind of connection you have. You need answers to the following questions:

- 1) Are there any connections to or from your private sewer lateral other than the connection to the public sewer in the street?
- 2) What is the exact location, above ground, of your sewer lateral? You need to know if your sewer lateral crosses onto another property. To determine this, your plumber should show the location of your sewer lateral using spray paint and/or small wooden stakes.
- 3) Does your sewer lateral connect to a public sewer line in the street or to a private sewer line in the street?



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What Your Plumber Should Give You

- 1) A DVD with video of your sewer lateral.
- 2) A report of their findings, including information related to a nonconforming sewer connection.
- 3) A map or drawing of the location of your sewer lateral.
- 4) An assessment of the connection status and condition of your sewer lateral.

What You Should Give the City of Portland

- 1) One copy of the DVD your plumber gave you. Please do not send originals as they cannot be returned to you.
- 2) One copy of your plumber's report or findings.
- 3) One copy of a map or drawing of the location of your sewer lateral. A color photo is also acceptable if it shows the location of the sewer lateral in relation to your property lines.
- 4) Please mail or email the information to:

Bureau of Environmental Services
Attn: Nonconforming Sewers
1120 SW 5th Avenue, Room 1000
Portland, Oregon 97204
Email: nonconforming@portlandoregon.gov

- 5) Please include your name, property address, mailing address if different, email, phone and sewer project name.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about nonconforming sewers, go to
www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/nonconforming.



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