

Q: What can I do as a homeowner to help maintain my portion of the sanitary sewer lateral that is within my property?

A: Educating yourself and being aware of what you allow to go down your pipes is very important to maintaining your sewer lateral and keeping things flowing without issue. Listed below are some helpful tips to keep in mind along with some other safe practices to consider implementing in your home to keep your sewer lateral operating in optimal condition.

1) Dispose of cooking oils & grease properly.

Avoid pouring any fats, oils, & grease from cooking down your drain via the kitchen sink. These liquids will eventually form into a solid that can cause a clog in your lateral costing you time and money to repair.



2) Pay attention to what you flush.

Avoid flushing things like paper towels, food scraps, dental floss, and hygiene products. Educate other household members on what should and shouldn't be flushed to prevent clogged sewer lines.

3) Use strainers or drain screens wherever possible.

Use a strainer or a drain screen/catcher to collect loose strands of hair in the bath and shower and to catch food particles in the kitchen sink.

4) Run the water regularly in the sinks and toilets to keep things moving along.

5) Know whether or not your home is equipped with a sewer lateral cleanout, which is a vertical pipe from the underground sewer lateral in your home up to the ground surface outside your home.

This is a point of access from which it can be serviced should you run into issues with back-up or blockages in the lateral. It is usually covered by a tight-fitting steel or plastic cap over the opening at the ground level. If your home does not have one, you may want to consider having one installed.



6) Ensure that there are no tree roots, debris or other blockages interfering with your sewer lateral. You may consider hiring a plumber to view the condition of the lateral using video equipment to see if any repairs are needed.

7) Schedule a regular maintenance cleaning of the sewer lateral in your home.