

Marina Sewer Maintenance District

5th Edition Annual Report

"We provide sewer maintenance services to protect the public and the environment in a highly-efficient, effective, and responsive manner."



To get more information, learn about the Department of Public Works, or report problems online, please visit our website: <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/>

Residences, Businesses, Homeowner/Condominium Associations,
Military Facilities, Federal, and State Complexes



The information in this newsletter can be provided in an alternate format for people with disabilities. To request these accommodations, please contact Sewer Maintenance Division, Direct Assessment Unit, at (626) 300-3399, Monday through Thursday, from 8 a.m. through 5 p.m.

Marina del Rey Sewer Maintenance	
District Facilities	Length/Number
Sewer Lines	12 miles
Manhole Structures	207
Sewage Pump Stations	1
Sewage Flow to City of L.A. Facilities	1,505 mgd*
City of L.A.'s Annual Sewage Disposal Charge (last year)	\$872,500

*mgd = million gallons per day

Description of Work/Event	Last Fiscal Year's Work Accomplishment
Total length of sewer lines cleaned	22 miles
Total number of manhole structure inspections	414
Total number of manhole structures adjusted to street level	2
Total service requests responses	14
Total number of pump station inspections	86
Total number of major pump station repairs	5
Total number of sewer overflow/flood out	1

Don't Pay for Free Services

Don't be misled by mailings or solicitations by companies offering their services to help reduce your Sewer Service Charge and usually charging a high fee for their services.



Our service charge is located on your Property Tax Bill under Consolidated Sewer. This service charge is not a tax, it's a service charge you pay for the service received just like your other utility bills. The property tax bill is a cost-effective way to collect these service charges.

If you think your charges are wrong or have questions, you are welcome to give us a call or write to us. We will investigate and respond to your inquiry and make correction, if necessary, at no cost to property owners.

We charge for the maintenance and repair of the sewer line in the street fronting your property whether you are connected or not. For this reason, property owners with access to a sewer line who choose to use septic systems are included in our sewer service charge assessment because under the Plumbing Code Title 28, should your septic tank break down you will not be able to obtain a permit to fix it. You will have to connect to the main sewer line at that point.

For more information regarding connection to the main sewer line, please contact your local Building and Safety Office. To find the nearest office, please visit their website:

http://ladpw.org/general/facilities/app_building.cfm



Los Angeles County
Department of Public Works
Sewer Maintenance Division
P.O. Box 1460
Alhambra, CA 91802-1460





Worker is checking panel for the pump times.

F.O.G. and Sanitary Sewer Overflows

Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) are not just bad for your arteries and your waistline; they are bad for sewers too.

Sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors, and threaten the environment. An increasingly common cause of overflows is sewer pipes blocked by grease. Grease gets into the sewer from household drains as well as from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants and other businesses.

Most of us know grease as the byproduct of cooking. Grease is found in such things as:

- Meat fats
- Lard
- Cooking oil
- Shortening
- Butter and margarine
- Food scraps
- Baking goods
- Sauces
- Dairy products

Continued on next column.

Too often grease is washed into the plumbing system, usually through a kitchen sink. Grease sticks to the insides of sewer pipes (both on your property and in the streets). Over time, the grease can build up and block the entire pipe.



Overflowing manhole

Impacts of SSOs

- Raw sewage overflowing in your home or your neighbor's home;
- An expensive and unpleasant cleanup;
- Raw sewage overflowing into parks, yards, and streets;
- Potential contact with disease-causing organisms; and
- An increase in operation and maintenance costs for local sewer departments, which causes higher sewer bills for customers.

Preventing SSOs Caused by FOG at Homes and Businesses.

1. Never pour grease down the sink drains or into toilets.
2. Scrape grease and food scraps from trays, plates, pots, pans, utensils, and grills and cooking surfaces into a can or the trash for disposal (or recycling where available).
3. Do not put grease down garbage disposals. Put baskets/strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the drain basket/strainers into the trash for disposal.
4. Speak with your friends and neighbors about the problem of grease in the sewer system and how to keep it out. Call your local sewer system authority if you have any questions.

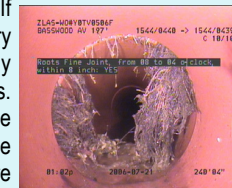
Restaurants, large buildings (such as apartment complexes), and other commercial establishments may have grease traps or interceptors that keep grease out of the sewer system. For a grease trap or interceptor to work correctly, it must be properly:

- Designed (sized and manufactured to handle the amount that is expected);
- Installed (level, vented, etc.); and
- Maintained (cleaned and serviced on a frequent basis).



Another cause of SSOs are roots in the sewer lateral. With the abundance of moisture, nutrients, and oxygen a broken sewer lateral is the ideal environment for roots to grow. The flow of warm water inside the sewer lateral causes water vapor to escape to the cold dry soil surrounding the pipes. Tree roots will penetrate the opening to reach the nutrients and moisture inside the pipe sometimes causing the cracks to get bigger and eventually the line will collapse. In some cases the roots will grow down the sewer lateral and protrude into the mainline sewer. Once inside, the roots will form a large mass that accumulates a thick coating of grease and eventually will block the flow of sewage causing a SSO and or flood out. Below are simple tips to prevent or minimize these problems.

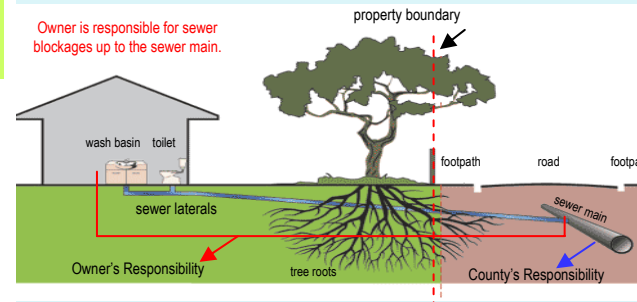
Doing regular maintenance is less costly than emergency repairs and will also prevent future problems. Hire a license plumber to check and clean your lateral every couple of years. If you have roots in your lateral a temporary solution would be to use an environmentally safe chemical to dissolve the roots. However, roots will continue to enter the broken lateral and cause further damage until the laterals are repaired. If laterals are not repaired roots will grow back thicker and stronger and will eventually cause raw sewage back-ups. Homeowners are responsible for fixing the line from their house to the connection in the street.



Root intrusion in a sewer

Homeowners should also be aware of the location of their sewer lines and refrain from planting trees, bushes, and hedges near the line. Consult with your local nursery to see which trees are safer, usually small, slow-growing species with less aggressive root systems are recommended but be aware that all tree roots can potentially get into the sewer line so before they get too big replace them.

SEWER LATERALS - AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY



POSITIONING OUR MANHOLES ON THE GLOBAL NETWORK

As part of our preventive maintenance activities, our crews locate and inspect our sanitary sewer manholes every six months to determine proper sewage flow levels and address any maintenance or structural issues. There are instances when manholes are buried under re-paved roadways or loose earth at easement locations. These conditions pose some challenges for our crews in locating these underground structures, consequently, increasing the inspection times at these areas. To assist in this critical maintenance activity, the District has embarked on a new endeavor of digitizing the locations of our manholes by utilizing global positioning system (GPS) hand-held units. While inspecting the sewage flows at all manhole locations, maintenance crews will obtain and permanently store the precise global coordinates of these structures in the District's database and geographic information system (GIS) maps. This information will facilitate in locating our manholes in the future during our preventive maintenance activities, as well as emergency incidents where time is of the essence. In addition, these coordinates will improve our maintenance maps by providing an accurate representation of the locations of our underground manholes and sewer mainlines in relation to nearby homes, buildings, and other utility infrastructure. This activity will further enhance our capability to maintain our sewer mainlines and respond to emergencies in a timely and cost-effective manner.



Contacts

If you see a Sewage Overflow, notify the Department of Public Works IMMEDIATELY! 1-800-675-HELP(4357) ☎

For questions or comments regarding this Annual Report, call (626) 300-3399 or for previous reports visit our website <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/smd/smd/>

If you would like to write to us, please send all inquiries to:
 County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
 Sewer Maintenance Division
 P.O. Box 1475
 Alhambra, CA 91802-1475