



## Town of Oyen

### Sanitary Sewer Service Maintenance Policy 42-002

#### PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to update and clarify responsibility as it pertains to the maintenance and replacement/repair of the lateral sewer line. Lateral sewer lines connect private properties to town mainlines within the collection system.

#### SUMMARY

Sewer line back-ups and blockages can be caused by a variety of issues including but not limited to: excessive grease, obstructions, root infiltration of line, infrequent usage (frozen lines) and breaks in the lateral sewer line. It is the responsibility of the property owner to investigate and arrange for the clearing of blockages as well as the repair to pipe defect on their property. It is the Town's responsibility to repair pipe defects on Town property.

#### POLICY STATEMENTS

The Town is responsible for maintaining a functioning sewage mainline network.

The Property Owner is responsible for maintaining adequate **sewage flow** to and through the lateral sewer line, from the property structure up to and including the tap connecting to the sewer main.

#### POLICY GUIDELINES

The Property Owner is fully responsible for maintaining adequate sewage flow to and through the lateral sewer line, from the building structure up to and including the tap connecting to the sewer main.

#### Blockages:

**If a blockage occurs anywhere in the lateral sewer line, including line located on Town property, it is the property owner's responsibility to clear the blockage.** The most common cause of sewer back-ups in the lateral sewer line are blockages caused by inappropriate items flushed down the toilet. Items that cause blockages include, but are not limited to:

- Rocks / gravel
- Rags and/or fabric
- 'Flushable' wipes
- Household debris
- Pipe defects \*\*\*
- Personal products (diapers, feminine hygiene, etc)
- Frozen lines \*
- Excessive grease
- Root Blockages \*\*

**\*Frozen lines** typically occur due to infrequent usage and or water leakage (sometimes from a furnace) into sewer pipes during an extended period of non-use.

**\*\*In the event of root blockages**, Property Owners are responsible for clearing the blockage. The costs of clearing the initial root blockage is the responsibility of the Property Owner. If the roots originate from a tree on Town property, the Town will be responsible for resolving the issue by repairing the line and/or removing the tree. Costs may be reimbursed in accordance with section 3 of this policy. If the tree is located on private property, it is the responsibility of the Property Owner and the owner of the property on which the tree is located to manage and pay for any repairs or tree removal required.

**\*\*\*Pipe defects** that cause a blockage may be caused by a variety of issues such as breaks in line,

disconnects, dis-jointed connections, crushed lines, sag in the line (poor grade), among others. Responsibility for repairs of defects on private property are to the owner.

#### Investigation / Repair Work:

1. Resident should contact a licensed plumber and notify the town of the problem. The plumber shall clear the blockage and begin his investigation into the cause. The town may check that the mainline is flowing properly.
2. The property owner is responsible for clearing the blockage, including all costs incurred for the initial investigation and any repairs required on the private side of the property line. Should the licensed plumber provide a CCTV video showing a pipe defect on the Town's side of the property line, the resident shall present the video to the Town and the Town will arrange for repairs to be completed.
1. Cost associated with the repair to the defect on the Town's side of the property line are borne by the Town. If the defect was the sole cause for the backup, the Town may reimburse the private owner the costs for the initial investigation. **In no case, will the Town reimburse the plumber directly** (all claims are to be in writing and directed through the private property owner).

#### DEFINITIONS

**Lateral Pipe** – A lateral sewer line is a pipeline connecting a building to the publicly-owned main sewer line. This includes the length of the line on city property to the main.

**Sewer Main / Sewer Mainline Network** – larger sewer lines typically running parallel to and under the main roads. Typically connected by manholes in a drainage grid.

**Licensed plumber** – a certified ticketed journeyman plumber.

**Pipe defect** – problems with a lateral pipe includes but not limited to; breaks in line, disconnects, disjointed connections, crushed lines, sag in the line (poor grade).

