

ATTACHMENT 3

PINELLAS COUNTY
FLORIDA

PRIVATE SEWER LATERAL
REBATE POLICY

November 2021

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I. Intent

Pinellas County Utilities (PCU) is committed to protecting public health and the environment through effective management of our wastewater treatment facilities and wastewater collection system. Groundwater and surface water inflow and infiltration (I&I) entering the wastewater collection system takes up valuable sewer capacity, contributes to causes of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), and adds costs for excess wastewater treatment. Defective private Sewer Laterals allow a significant amount of I&I into the wastewater collection system, and therefore, Pinellas County institutes this Private Sewer Lateral Rebate Policy (Rebate Policy).

The Rebate Policy assists private single-family residential property owners with the cost of conducting sanitary sewer lateral inspections and lining or replacing sanitary sewer laterals within the Pinellas County Utilities (PCU) wastewater collection system service area.

The goal of the Rebate Policy is to reduce the amount of I&I entering PCU's wastewater collection system from defective privately owned sanitary sewer laterals. Reducing the amount of groundwater infiltrating into the wastewater collection system through defective laterals will aid in reducing the risk of SSOs, reducing extraneous flow to treatment facilities, and increasing available system capacity.

II. Definitions

Cleanout means a segment of pipe connected to an underground private Sewer Lateral and rising to the surface, providing access to the sewer lateral for purposes of inspection and cleaning.

County Sewer System (System) the portion of the wastewater facility (WWF) that consists of the collection system which conveys the wastewater to the treatment facility. This consists of sanitary sewers, trunk sewers, interceptors, lift stations, force mains, and all appurtenances between the private Sewer Laterals (or building sewers) and the wastewater treatment facility.

Defective means, as applied to a Private Sewer Lateral, a Private Sewer Lateral for which any of the following conditions exist upon inspection by a licensed plumbing contractor or other competent professional:

1. evidence of pipe or joint cracks or deterioration,
2. root intrusion into a pipe,
3. a misaligned pipe segment, sag, or lack of positive gradient,
4. a lack of a necessary cleanout cap,
5. a downspout, drain, defective cleanout, or other connection that allows storm water or other extraneous water to enter the sanitary sewer system, and/or
6. a defect (e.g., crack, fracture, hole, open joint) or active leak that allows the discharge of sewage on the property or the introduction of extraneous water into the County sewer system.

Infiltration means groundwater that enters a sewer system, including service connections, through defective pipes, pipe joints, connections, service connections, manholes, or pump stations. Infiltration does not include, and is distinguished from inflow.

Inflow means surface water and stormwater that enters a collection/transmission system, including service connections, from sources such as roof leaders, cellar drains, yard drains, area drains, drains from wet areas, foundation drains, cross connections between storm sewers and sanitary sewers, catch basins, stormwater, surface runoff, manhole covers, or drainage. Inflow does not include, and is distinguished from, infiltration.

Licensed Plumbing Contractor means a plumber licensed and insured in the State of Florida pursuant to Chapter 553 and Section 489.105, Florida Statutes.

PCU-Prequalified Licensed Plumbing Contractor is a licensed plumber or contractor that meets the requirements specified by Pinellas County Utilities for registration as prequalified, which includes defined qualification criteria, an active license, familiarity with standard drawings and specifications and submittal requirements associated with this policy and providing a warranty for a minimum of one (1) year.

Private Collection and Transmission Systems (Private sewer system) are privately owned sanitary sewers, manholes, lift stations, force mains and any other facility that discharges into the County sewer system excluding single-family residences.

Private Collection and Transmission Systems (Private sewer system) Operating Permit is a permit from the County provided to owners of a private sewer system allowing the private owner to discharge wastewater into the County sewer system that includes terms and conditions and performance requirements for the owner to maintain and operate their system in accordance with County requirements.

Private Sewer Lateral means a pipe that carries wastewater, excluding storm, surface and ground water starting just outside the building and ending at the right-of-way or recorded easement, and connects directly to the County System.

Private Sewer Lateral Maintenance means the routine inspection, flushing, rodding, and removal of grease, roots, and debris of a private Sewer Lateral of located within private property up to the right-of-way to maintain a free-flowing condition.

Property means any real property, or portion thereof, located in the County, including buildings or structures and private sewer infrastructure situated on the surface or beneath the surface of the property, including the private Sewer Lateral up to the right-of-way.

Rehabilitation, as applied to private Sewer Laterals, means the lining of the complete length of the private Sewer Lateral with a cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) liner to bring the private Sewer Lateral into compliance with minimum functional requirements. This also includes any other work necessary to prepare the pipe for lining.

Replacement, as applied to private Sewer Laterals, means the installation of a complete new private Sewer Lateral and cleanout.

Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) means a wastewater overflow from a manhole, a confined repair site, or directly onto the ground from a cleanout, or from the sanitary collection and transmission system (regardless of volume) within the County.

Smoke Testing involves pushing a simulated, non-toxic, non-staining simulated smoke through a community's sanitary sewer collecting system, then observing and documenting where the smoke exits. This method for identifying I&I typically involves residential, commercial, and industrial areas. Field technicians set up a blower over a neighborhood manhole, and non-toxic simulated smoke is pumped through the sewer line. The exiting smoke can indicate the location of a broken sewer pipe, manholes, catch basins, or where roof or foundation drains are connected to the sewer system.

III. Rebate Eligibility

The Rebate Policy is anticipated to begin in 2022. Pinellas County Utilities will provide the specific date when rebates will be available. Once the program is available, the following eligibility requirements will apply.

A property owner is eligible under this Rebate Policy if the property:

1. is located within the PCU service area,
2. serves a single-family residence,
3. has a private Sewer Lateral that is connected to the County wastewater collection system,
4. is not connected to the County wastewater collection system through a private collection and transmission system (private sewer system), and
5. has not previously received a rebate for sewer lateral replacement or rehabilitation under this Rebate Policy

IV. Rebate information

PCU offers rebates to eligible property owners for:

1. private Sewer Lateral inspections, and
2. private Sewer Lateral replacements or rehabilitation (via cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) liner only).

At PCU's discretion, rebates will be awarded in the planned amounts of up to a maximum amount of \$350 for the initial private Sewer Lateral inspection and 50% of the cost of private sewer replacement or rehabilitation, up to a maximum amount of \$3,500. Rebate amounts are subject to change. Rebates will be based on actual costs that are customary for the services rendered, excluding any additional restoration costs that are above customary. Reimbursement is pending the availability of funds and is on a first come first serve basis.

V. Private Sewer Lateral Inspection Requirements

A private Sewer Lateral inspection involves the use of a closed-circuit television (CCTV) inspection camera and is conducted by a PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractor according to PCU specifications. Smoke testing is not considered an acceptable inspection method.

A defective sewer lateral is one that is not in good working order. The lateral is deemed defective, for the purposes of this policy, if any of the following conditions exist upon inspection:

- evidence of pipe or joint cracks or deterioration,
- root intrusion into a pipe,
- a severely misaligned pipe segment, sag, or lack of positive gradient,
- a lack of necessary cleanout cap,
- a downspout, drain, defective cleanout, other connection that allows storm water or other extraneous water to enter the County sewer system, and/or
- a defect (e.g., crack or hole) or active leak that allows the discharge of sewage onto the property or the introduction of extraneous water into the County sewer system.

The PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractor providing the private Sewer Lateral inspection provides certification to the property owner and to PCU as to whether the lateral is in good working order or is defective, with supporting CCTV video inspection records.

If the private Sewer Lateral is found to be in good working order as certified by the PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractor, the lateral is considered as passing and will not qualify for a rebate for repair/replacement.

If the private Sewer Lateral is found to be defective as certified by the PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractor, the private Sewer Lateral must be brought into good working order as quickly as possible, but no longer than 365 calendar days after the initial finding that the private Sewer Lateral is defective.

VI. Private Sewer Lateral Inspection Rebate Request

The property owner is responsible for payment to the PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractor providing the initial private Sewer Lateral inspection.

Once the PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractor provides the private Sewer Lateral inspection certification and supporting CCTV records to the property owner and to PCU, the property owner may submit a request for a Private Sewer Lateral Inspection Rebate. The process for submitting a rebate request is defined by PCU and detailed on the PCU website. The rebate request and receipt must be submitted and received by PCU within 90 days of the inspection to be eligible for a rebate under this policy.

Private sewer lateral rebate requests are reviewed by PCU, and payments made to the property owner within 90 days of receipt of the request, unless issues with the request, certification, or supporting documentation are found. Any issues noted will be communicated directly to the property owner and the PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractor, as appropriate, for rectification.

VII. Private Sewer Lateral Replacement and Rehabilitation Requirements

If a property owner brings their defective sewer lateral back into good working order by replacing the entire private Sewer Lateral, the property owner is eligible for a private Sewer Lateral

replacement/rehabilitation rebate with required documentation. Lining of the entire lateral may be eligible for the rebate under certain conditions at the discretion of the Utilities Director, or their designee.

The property owner hires and is responsible for payment to the licensed plumbing contractor for replacement or rehabilitation of their private Sewer Lateral.

The licensed plumbing contractor must obtain all necessary permits from the appropriate Building Department before work may begin. For laterals fully lined or replaced, pressure testing will also be required. Whether the lateral is replaced or lined, the County performs the post construction inspection.

VIII. Private Sewer Lateral Replacement/Rehabilitation Rebate Request

The property owner is responsible for payment to the licensed plumbing contractor providing the private Sewer Lateral replacement/rehabilitation.

Once the licensed plumbing contractor completes the lateral replacement or rehabilitation and the County inspects and closes the applicable permits, the property owner may submit a request for a Private Sewer Lateral Replacement/Rehabilitation Rebate. The process for submitting a rebate request is defined by PCU and detailed on the PCU website. The rebate request and receipt must be submitted and received by PCU within 90 days of project completion and testing to be eligible for a rebate under this policy.

Private sewer lateral rebate requests are reviewed by PCU, and payments made to the property owner within 90 days of receipt of the request, unless issues with the request or supporting documentation are found. Any issues noted will be communicated directly to the property owner.

IX. Licensed Plumbing Contractor Prequalification

PCU maintains a list of prequalified licensed plumbing contractors that meet specified requirements and are registered with PCU to complete private Sewer Lateral inspections in accordance with this policy. PCU-prequalified licensed plumbing contractors must meet defined qualification criteria, have active licenses, be familiar with standard drawings and specifications and submittal requirements associated with this policy, and warrant their work for a minimum of one (1) year.

The specific requirements and registration process for licensed plumbing contractors is defined by PCU and detailed on the PCU website. Property owners may select and use any licensed plumbing contractor on this prequalified list to be eligible for rebates as defined in this policy.

X. Policy Impact

The effectiveness of the Rebate Policy is evaluated based on property owners' participation throughout the PCU wastewater collection system service area. The overall effectiveness of reducing I&I throughout the PCU wastewater collection system depends on whether participation rates are low or high, and whether sanitary sewer lateral lining or replacement work is clustered or dispersed.

This policy, in conjunction with other private Sewer Lateral policies, provides PCU the best opportunity to reduce I&I in the PCU wastewater collection system and help protect the environment and public health from SSOs.