



Tips for Repair or Replacement of Sewer Lines

Union Sanitary District provides collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater for Fremont, Newark, and Union City. We know that repair or replacement of your sanitary sewer lateral can be a large investment that deserves careful consideration. Here are some tips about different types of sewer repair and replacement, working with contractors, and obtaining permits for you to keep as a reference.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email us at permits@unionsanitary.ca.gov or call us at (510) 477-7500. We're happy to answer any questions that you may have about any step of the repair or replacement process.

Getting Started...

Be aware that having an old sewer line does not automatically mean that it needs repair or replacement!

You can hire a plumber to televise your sewer to verify its condition. This typically costs approximately \$200 - \$300 dollars. USD is available to review the video and answer your questions at no charge.

Permit Information and Homeowner Responsibility

You are responsible for your lateral from your building to where it connects to the sewer main in the street.

A permit is required from USD prior to any work on your sewer outside of the building.

Replacement of your entire lateral will require your contractor to obtain an encroachment permit from your city for work in the street in addition to USD's permit.

Pipe-Bursting

This is the most popular method for rehabilitating sewer laterals in USD's service area. A bursting tool with new plastic sewer pipe attached is pulled through the existing sewer pipe. This system is much less intrusive than the old method of digging an open trench along the entire lateral.

This method requires a three-foot by three-foot excavation at both ends of the replacement. The cost of pipe bursting typically ranges between roughly \$4,000 and \$15,000, depending on factors such as the length of the sewer lateral, depth, groundwater, location on the property, and the extent of surface restoration required.



Pipebursting: new plastic sewer pipe is pulled through the old sewer line, allowing replacement without digging an open trench across the street to the hook-up with USD's main line



Working with Contractors

Homeowners should be as informed as possible about all aspects of work to be done in order to best evaluate contractor recommendations. USD highly encourages homeowners to contact us before hiring a contractor/plumber.

Obtaining bids from more than one contractor is to your advantage, as bid amounts can vary from roughly \$4,000 to \$15,000 for the same project, the same materials and the same workmanship.

USD’s inspectors apply the same rigorous standards to all projects. Whether you pay \$4,000 or \$15,000 for the work, USD will thoroughly inspect the project to ensure its quality before approving it.

Read Your Contract Carefully!

Be sure the contract clearly states the services that will be provided, and also states that a USD permit will be obtained. Items such as cleanout boxes and overflow devices should be included, as well as site cleanup.

Look for an outline of payment terms. You should always be able to retain a percentage of the total payment until the job is complete and you have received a copy of USD’s acceptance letter.

For residential repairs, you should require your contractor to pay USD’s \$500 Permit Holder Deposit, which will be refunded to them after the job has passed our final inspection. A USD residential repair permit costs between \$200 - \$350.

Sewer Replacement or Repair by Open Trench

Sewer line replacement involves excavating the entire sewer line from where it leaves the house (the “kickout”) to where the lateral connects to USD’s main sewer line in the street. If the sewer line runs underneath landscaping, a driveway, or pavers, those must also be removed to dig down to the line.

The new sewer line requires a bed of at least six inches of crushed rock for support. USD inspectors verify that the proper materials are used and observe as the line is tested for leaks. If the line passes the test, six inches of gravel is placed on top of the pipe. The pipe should then be completely covered with earth and compacted. Concrete and landscaping are replaced where possible, and the street must be repaved according to your city’s specifications.

Photos of Open-Trench replacement of a lateral:
(1) Connection of the lateral to USD’s main in the street; (2) Gravel dumped for bedding the pipe; (3) A properly bedded lateral – view from street to curb;

(4) Lateral showing cleanout and concrete cleanout box; (5) View of lateral from house to trench in street.



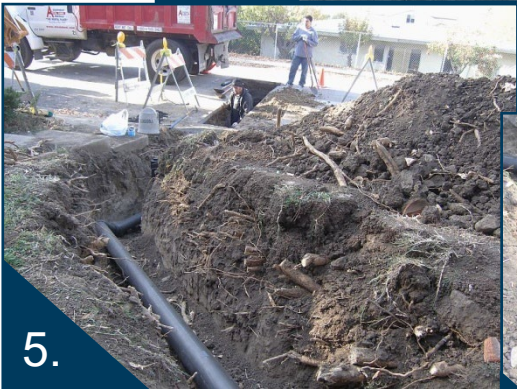
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For more information, see our website at www.unionsanitary.ca.gov. Click on the Residents tab to find out about sewer repairs, sewer safety, and homeowner do’s and don’ts.