



## Gwinnett County Sewer Service Lateral Repair / Cleaning Policy

If you are experiencing a back-up in your sewer lateral or home, and believe the blockage is in the County-maintained system or in your sewer service lateral, immediately stop using as much water as possible (dishwashers, showers, clothes washing machines, etc.) and contact the Department of Water Resources' 24-hour emergency service line at 678-376-7000.

- Once DWR is contacted, an investigator will be sent to the property, day or night, to examine the sewer main and your sewer service connection (your lateral) up to the limits of the right-of-way to determine the source of the back-up.
- If the investigator finds that the back-up is in the sewer main or the portion of the service lateral that is within the right-of-way, they will call a crew to clean the sewer main or make repairs as necessary to relieve the back-up and restore flow.
- If the investigator determines that the blockage is located in the lateral because no blockage is found in the sewer main, the investigator will attempt to determine the location of the blockage by inspecting the cleanout located in the right-of-way or by other available means or other access points.
- If the investigator determines that the location of the blockage cannot be found as a result of your sewer service lateral not having a clean-out at the right-of-way, with permission of the property owner, DWR will install a clean-out for the County's convenience at the right-of-way.
- Once all requirements are met, installation of the cleanout will usually occur within 2 to 5 business days, but could be delayed due to emergencies or scheduling issues. Trees, landscaping, or shrubs interfering with this installation will be removed and will not be replaced. Only grass cover matching the surrounding area will be installed by DWR. Maintenance of the grass after placement is the owner's responsibility. No claims for reimbursement regarding additional landscaping or removed trees will be considered.
- In some cases it may not be feasible or necessary to install a clean-out, such as if the lateral is under a driveway, located in an inaccessible area, or if other means can or have been used to determine the location of the blockage. In this case, you will need to contact a plumber for further repairs.
- It is the responsibility of the property owner to repair any failures or blockages of the sewer service lateral if the blockage is outside of the right-of-way. Property owners may also be held responsible for any damages that occur as a result of

foreign objects such as roots or debris entering into the county-maintained sewer through their sewer lateral.

- If you choose to hire a plumber to address the back-up on your sewer service lateral and they find that the only blockage is within the right-of-way, you may file a claim to be reimbursed for charges associated with those repairs. **DWR staff must visually inspect the lateral following excavation but prior to repair if you seek to submit a claim for reimbursement.** Call DWR to request an inspection. You should anticipate a minimum of 2-3 hours for DWR staff to be able to reach the site of the work after contacting DWR.
- Please submit the following in order to file a claim:
  1. Loss location - address of incident
  2. Property owner name, mailing address and phone number(s)
  3. Resident name, mailing address and phone number(s), if different from owner
  4. Date and time incident(s)
  5. A brief statement of what took place and nature of claim
  6. A description of loss/damage
  7. A copy of the bills incurred
  8. Pictures, if available.

All of this information should be e-mailed to: [Sara.Pilgrim@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:Sara.Pilgrim@gwinnettcountry.com)  
If you do not have access to a scanner you may fax the information to 678-376-6930 or mail to:

Gwinnett County DWR  
684 Winder Hwy  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045  
Attn: Sara Pilgrim

- Requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and reimbursement is not guaranteed. Additional conditions apply to the reimbursement process.

For more information, refer to the document “Standard Procedure for Clearing Sanitary Sewer Back-ups and Overflows” posted at [www.Gwinnetth2o.com](http://www.Gwinnetth2o.com) or call (678) 376-7000.

