

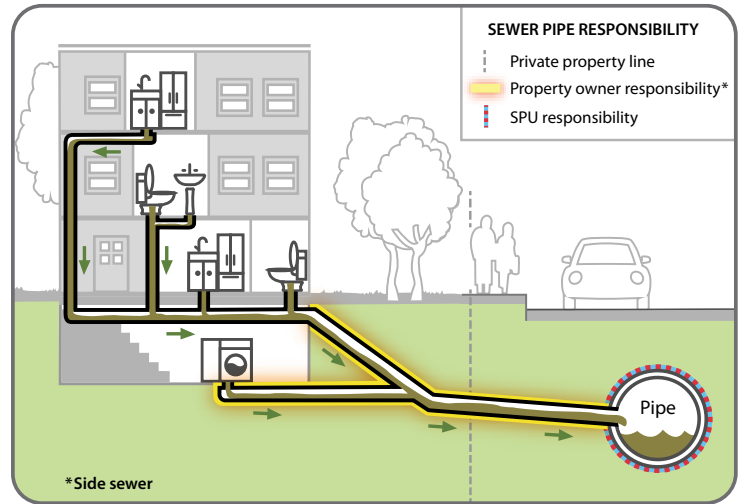
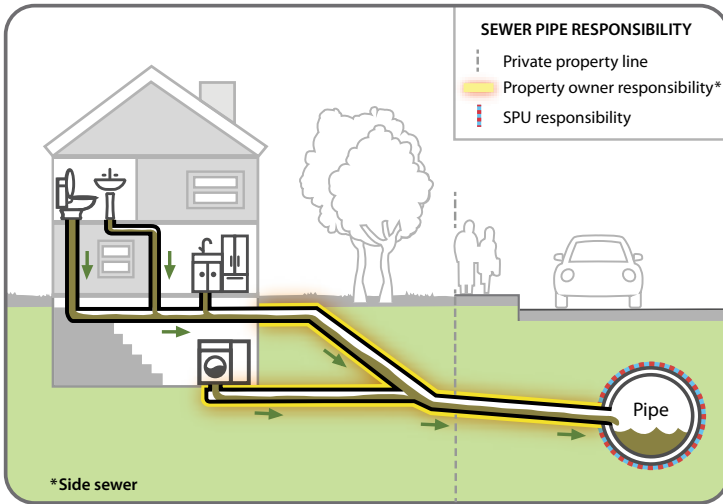


# Taking Care of Your Sewer Pipe

## What is a “side sewer”?

A “side sewer” is a privately-owned sewer pipe that carries wastewater from a building’s sinks, drains, and toilets to the public sewer mainline. If you own your home or building, you own your side sewer up until the public sewer pipe under a street near your home.

We have information and tips to help you understand, protect, maintain, and if needed, repair your sewer pipe(s).



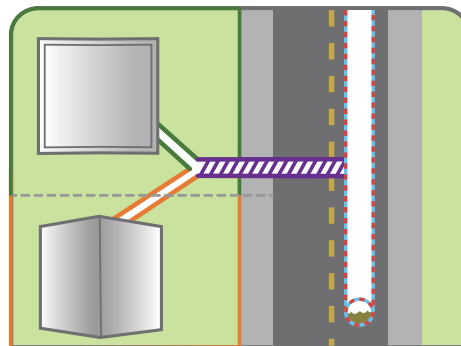
## Three simple steps for side sewer care

As a property owner, it’s important to understand your sewer pipe responsibilities.

### 1 Know where it is

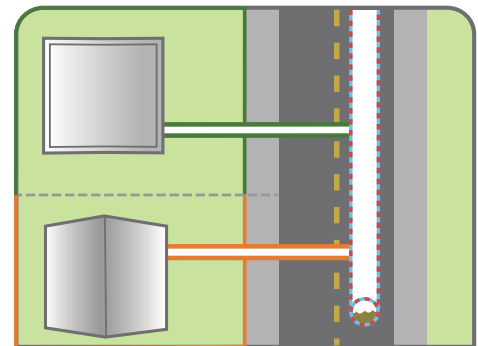
Find your property’s side sewer information on the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection website. You may share a side sewer with your neighbor, which means you will need to coordinate if repairs are needed.

Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection  
website: [web6.seattle.gov/dpd/sidesewercardsv2/](http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/sidesewercardsv2/)



**SEWER PIPE RESPONSIBILITY**

- Private property line
- Property owner A
- Property owner B
- Property owner A and B combined sewer responsibility
- SPU responsibility



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Look at all of that grease!



Sewer pipes are small!

## 2 Keep it clean

Put trash in the trash: Flush only toilet paper and human waste. Everything else clogs pipes and pump stations, and ultimately must be hauled to the landfill.

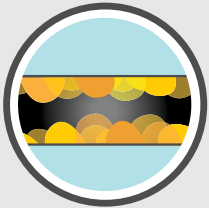
Keep cooking oil, grease and food waste out of the drain: Oil and grease from food builds up in pipes and can cause sewer backups. View more info and a helpful guide to kitchen cooking oil and grease disposal: [seattle.gov/util/cookingoil](http://seattle.gov/util/cookingoil)

## 3 Get it inspected!

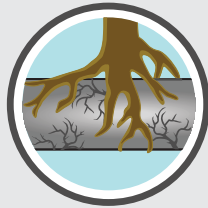
Hire a plumber, drain rooting service, or sewer inspector who can run a video camera through your side sewer to find problems.

### About inspections

- **How much will it cost?** A sewer video inspection generally costs \$230 - \$845, depending on your pipe's condition.
- **How often should I inspect it?** SPU recommends inspecting your side sewer at least every 8-10 years. If there are large trees or shrubs growing near the side sewer, increase this frequency to at least every 2-3 years. When considering purchasing a home, have the side sewer inspected.
- **What issues could I encounter?** Below are potential problems that you may find when you inspect your sewer pipe.



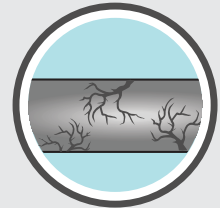
**Cooking oil and grease** from food preparation builds up in pipes.



**Tree and shrub roots** can easily grow into cracks or holes especially in older pipes.



**Debris** could include flushed trash or other non-degradable materials.



**Cracked pipes** leak sewage and invite tree root damage.

**How do I find a sewer inspection company?** It can be hard to know how to choose a contractor to inspect your side sewer. Talking to near neighbors can be helpful. Resources such as Angie's List and Yelp offer customer ratings. Check with at least three companies to compare costs. You can use any licensed plumber for a side sewer scope or a rooting service.

**Clean or repair your side sewer:** Regular cleaning can help prevent costly repairs. Cleaning costs vary depending on the pipe's length, ease of access and amount of debris, but are generally less than \$1,500. No City permit is required for routine cleaning of your side sewer. Repair of a broken or damaged side sewer is much more expensive. A repair that does not require digging could range from \$100-170 per foot for re-lining or pipe bursting, depending on circumstances.

Refer to SPU's **Troubleshooting Your Sewer Problem** guide for more info on how to repair your side sewer.