



SIDE SEWER FAQ

NOW
ONLINE

City of Seattle
Department of Planning
and Development

Side Sewer Program
(206) 684-8860

Office Location
22nd floor
Seattle Municipal Tower

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SIDESEWER**

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is a side sewer?

A side sewer is a privately owned and maintained pipe system which is designed to carry drainage water or waste water from a plumbing outlet or other approved facility from a building or structure to the public sewer system located in the public right-of-way (ROW) or other approved discharge point.

What is a public sewer system?

A public sewer system is a publicly owned and maintained sewage system which carries waste water and flows to a public treatment facility.

Where is the division of the “public” side and the “private” side of the sewer system?

The private ownership of the side sewer starts at the connection to the public sewer system and extends to the plumbing discharge point outside the building or structure. The private side of the side sewer is the property owner’s responsibility and is not serviced or repaired by the City of Seattle.

How do I get a permit?

A side sewer permit can be obtained from DPD’s Drainage Counter located in the Applicant Service Center (ASC), on the 20th floor of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave., (206) 684-8850. DPD Client Assistance Memo (CAM) #503, Side Sewer Permits in Seattle, contains details on basic permit application processes for obtaining a side sewer permit. The CAM can be found at www.seattle.gov/dpd/cams.

What’s the first step in getting my side sewer line repaired?

You should request a TV/video inspection of the side sewer between the building or structure and the public sewer system from a side sewer contractor. From the results of the TV/video the side sewer contractor should provide you with information on the status of the existing side sewer and recommendations as to what repairs would be required to help prevent future side sewer backups.

What should I do if I smell sewer odors/gases out in the street or sewage is overflowing from a sewer manhole located in the street?

Immediately contact the Seattle Public Utility Drainage Complaint line at (206) 386-1800.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Do I need to hire a Registered Side Sewer Contractor (RSSC) for my project?

A RSSC is only required when working in the right-of-way (ROW). Work on private property can be done by anyone. When hiring a contractor, it is recommended that the contractor has done this type of work recently in the City of Seattle. Side sewer regulations differ greatly in different jurisdictions and from the plumbing code (IPC).

When is a side sewer permit required?

A side sewer permit is required any time you install, repair or replace sewer or storm pipe that discharges to the public system. The property owner is required to obtain a City of Seattle permit to repair the side sewer. A City site inspector will inspect the repaired line to validate that the work was performed according to code. If you need guidance as to policies or procedures, please contact the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) Side Sewer Program which can be found at www.seattle.gov/dpd/SideSewer.

What size of pipe is required?

- For storm or sewer on private property serving one unit, 4-inch is the minimum size allowed.
- For storm or sewer in the public right of way or for sewer serving two or more units, 6-inch is the minimum size allowed.

What type of pipe is required?

There are two pipe products that are most commonly available.

- If you will have greater than 18” of cover over the pipe as measured from the crown of the pipe, PVC pipe – ASTM D 3034 SDR 35 is acceptable.
- If you will have less than 18” of cover over the pipe as measured from the crown of the pipe, PVC pipe schedule 40 – ASTM D 1785 with fittings per ASTM D 2466 and D 2467 is acceptable.

Please note: This is a solid wall pipe, also referred to as “well casing”. Cellular core pipe is NOT acceptable.

Does the pipe need to be bedded?

Bedding is required for the pipe materials (listed above) for both storm and sewer. The pipe must be bedded to the springline (half-way up the pipe) in 5/8” crushed rock (Type 22). This is an angular gravel without fines. The pipe needs to be bedded at the time of the inspection. Pea gravel is not acceptable for bedding PVC pipe.

Do I need to pressure test the pipe?

For sewer only, you need to pressure test all new pipe that is greater than 10' in length. This is done by either a water pressure test, with a hydrostatic head of 6' above the crown of the pipe at the upper end of the test section, OR filling the line with 3.5 psi of air (per City of Seattle Standard Specifications 7-17.3(4) B, Exfiltration Test). The line shall be under test when the inspector arrives and needs to hold for a minimum of 10 minutes to show no leakage.

Are there any restrictions on pipe fittings?

90 degree bends and/or tees are not allowed. All changes in grade or line shall be made with 45 degree or 22 ½ degree bends or wyes. The maximum deflection of two adjacent fittings shall not exceed 45 degrees unless the adjacent fittings are spanned by straight pipe of 2 feet or more.

Do footing drains need to be inspected?

The City of Seattle will inspect the connection tightline from the footing drains to a service drain. If your project has geotechnical special inspections, your geotechnical special inspector must inspect the footing drains prior to cover. The City of Seattle will inspect the discharge point of connection. Footing drains cannot be day-lighted to the ROW.

For complete information please refer to the following Director's Rules (DRs):

- o DPD DR 2-2006/SPU DR 01-06, Requirements for Design and Construction of Side Sewers (Wastewater Discharges) www.seattle.gov/dclu/codes/dr/DR2006-2.pdf
- o DPD DR 3-2006/SPU DR 02-06, Requirements for Design and Construction of Service Drains (Drainage Water Discharges) www.seattle.gov/dclu/codes/dr/DR2006-3.pdf

Contact Information

Inspection Request Line	(206) 684-8900
Site Development Services..... (and inspection cancellation)	(206) 684-8860
Drainage Counter	(206) 684-5362

These Side Sewer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and more side sewer information are also available online at:
www.seattle.gov/dpd/sidesewer