

Hello citizens of Orem, my name is Sam Kelly and I am the City Engineer for Orem. The Engineering division for the City of Orem is responsible for the design and construction management of most of the City capital improvement projects in the City right of way. We also issue permits and inspect construction for private development projects. Simply put, our division is involved with most construction outside of a building.

With the holiday season upon us, I would like to take a little time to inform you of some options if you happen to be unlucky enough to experience problems with your sewer or water lateral. First, if you have enrolled in some sort of utility repair insurance, please contact them. They have a list of preferred contractors that should be available to repair your sewer or water lateral. Like most insurance claims, it could take some time to have the lateral repaired. Which brings me to my second point. If your situation is not a dire emergency, in that you don't have raw sewage in your home or water spraying down from your ceiling, you can possibly save yourself some money by contacting a few contractors and creating a more competitive bid situation for your lateral repair.

Concerning your sewer service, if you haven't had any previous issues, no large trees in your yard, or there hasn't been a utility contractor working in the front of your home, a rooter type company should be able to clear your line and get you back to normal. If not here are a few things you should consider:

- Have the contractor provide video evidence of the problem. Most if not all of the plumbing contractors have the ability to camera your line and show you where the problem is in your line.
- In the event of an emergency, the City can provide sewer lateral camera service for the homeowner. Visit orem.org/help to schedule an appointment. Our staff can access the lateral from the sewer main or from the cleanout outside the home. In some cases we may not be able to access the lateral from the main due to constraints of the pipe type, size, etc. To access the lateral from the home we do ask that the owner provide a reasonable access point. Our staff is very experienced, but we do not remove toilets, climb roofs, etc to access your sewer lateral. We may not be able to provide the service that same day, but we will make our best attempt to get there as soon as possible.
- If a liner is being proposed as a solution to your problem, be aware that a liner will not mitigate issues concerning flat slope, high points, low points, or if the lateral has shifted out of alignment due to settlement. Liners are great solutions to mitigate tree roots that have infiltrated the pipe at joints, or if the lateral has deteriorated to the point that the earth around the pipe is falling into the lateral and causing a blockage.
- If your lateral has some of the issues mentioned above (flat, high point, low point, shift, etc) a good solution is to have a contractor excavate the area and repair the pipe. There are multiple ways to do this and again, please get a few bids for the work. Also know that some excavating contractors are qualified to perform the lateral repair work and in some cases are better equipped to perform the work.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office at (801) 229-7058 and we will be able to assist you with your questions. Have a safe and joyous holiday season.