

EAST & WEST SPRING LAKE WASTEWATER MSBU

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Vacuum Sewer Collection System

What is a vacuum sewer collection system?

A vacuum sewer system utilizes negative pressure to draw the wastewater from the various homes collection points (vacuum valve pits) to the central receiving tank in the vacuum station similar to a straw in a beverage container.

Why was a vacuum sewer collection system selected for this project?

A preliminary engineering report was prepared for this project which reviewed six different sewer alternatives. Vacuum sewer was determined to be the most feasible solution for this area.

Where is the vacuum collection station located?

The southwest quadrant of the intersection of Azalea Avenue and Skylark Street.

What is a vacuum valve pit?

The vacuum valve pit contains a sump and valve that acts as the interface between the gravity sewer service lateral coming from your house and the vacuum collection system.

Where will the vacuum valve pits be located?

Valve pits will be located within the road rights-of-way, near the property line. Each valve pit will have a dedicated air intake terminal. One valve pit can serve up to 4 homes.

Is power required to operate the vacuum valve?

No, power is not required.

Will there be any smell associated with the system operations?

There should be no noticeable smell from the vacuum collection system.

Will there be any noise associated with the operation of the vacuum collection system?

Any noise generated from the vacuum system will be minimal.

On-Going Construction

Will I be provided notice prior to the start of construction on my street?

Yes, the contractor will be giving prior notice to the property owners a few days before the construction activity takes place.

What can I expect when the contractor is working in my neighborhood installing sewer lines?

Certainly, you can expect some inconvenience due to equipment movement, material transport and trench excavation. The contractor will, however, try to minimize this inconvenience as much as possible. The main conflict will be when the pipe installation crosses your driveway which will be restored as quickly as possible.

When will the roads be repaired?

Road excavations will be temporally restored as soon as possible once the trench has been backfilled, by the end of each day unless some unforeseen problem is encountered. Roads will be completely resurfaced upon completion of the project.

On-Lot Sewer Connection/Connection To Home

What is involved with the on-lot construction?

- First, CCU staff is requesting each homeowner to fill out and send back the customer survey.
- Second, CCU staff will schedule a meeting with you to discuss your particular situation, answer any questions you may have and then finalize a site layout and general agreement spelling out exactly what will take place.
- Once the signed general agreement is complete and central sewer is available, the construction crews will be scheduled to complete the work. The construction crew will inform you a few days prior of the actual work date.
- Your septic tank will be pumped clean to remove all liquids and solids. The septic tank will be properly abandoned by breaking the bottom to allow drainage, crushing the lid and filling the tank with dirt to match existing yard surface.
- The excavation for the gravity sewer service lateral will take place, the gravity sewer service lateral will be installed and connected at the home and the property line, the trench will be backfilled and leveled.
- The final step will be the replacement of sod which should follow in just a few days.

Will the condition of my property be documented prior to start of construction?

Yes, during the meeting with you to discuss all the aspects of the construction, the condition of your property will be documented and become a part of the signed agreement. Any changes that occur between the initial meeting and start of construction will be documented prior to construction.

Are there any other fees that I will be required to pay to connect?

No additional fees will be charged. Everything is included in the MSBU assessment that you are already paying. All properties within the boundaries of the MSBU are assessed on the annual tax bill for the connection fee and wastewater collection infrastructure.

My septic system is in failure, do I get priority to connect my house?

CCU will definitely take into consideration failing septic systems in the connection scheduling.

When will my home be connected to the central sewer system?

Home connections should start around May 2016 when the vacuum station is operable. The first homes connected will be determined based upon vacuum main completion schedules. CCU will have a more definitive schedule closer to April 2016 and we will inform everyone at that time. It will take approximately 18 months to complete all home connections in the East and West Spring Lake Wastewater Expansion Project area once they start.

How long will it take to complete the connection to my home?

All of the work should be completed within one day except for the replacement of the sod which will take a few days.

Who will be responsible for maintenance of the gravity sewer service lateral located on private property?

The property owner will be responsible for any future maintenance after installation.

My septic tank is under a concrete slab, porch and/or deck how will it be abandoned?

Generally, if the septic tank is not accessible, the septic tank is pumped entirely of all contents and then filled with low-strength concrete slurry.

How will my landscaping be impacted and restored?

Any landscaping will be avoided if at all possible by either going around it or directionally drilling under the landscape features. If for some reason, avoidance is not possible, CCU staff will come to a mutual agreement with you on how the restoration will be handled. Those issues will also be documented in the signed agreement.

I have trees/shrubs located within the right-of way, what will happen if they are in the way of construction?

Landscape features located within the right-of-way will be preserved where feasible provided that they do not interfere with installation of utility facilities or swale restoration. If they interfere with construction, they will be removed and will not be replaced within the rights-of-way.

What impacts will construction have on my driveway?

Most driveways will be removed within the right-of-way to install the pipes/mains providing wastewater services. The driveway will be restored with like materials. A temporary dirt/gravel driveway will be provided the same day. The final driveway restoration will be scheduled for a later date as restoration of the rights-of-way is being completed. Where feasible, trenchless pipe installation methods will be utilized to avoid decorative driveways.

What is a trenchless pipe method?

Trenchless pipe installation involves horizontal drilling to install a pipe. This requires two pits to be installed on either side of the drill, but does not disturb the surface in between. There are limitations that will not allow trenchless pipe installation in all instances.

I would like to extend the culvert pipe and add a new driveway; can this be done in conjunction with this project?

Once the vacuum mains are installed, you can schedule a new driveway with culvert to be installed. You will be responsible to contract for this work and obtain the required permits.

I have irrigation lines located within the rights-of-way, what will happen if they are in the way of construction?

Every effort will be made to work around the irrigation lines; however, if the lines are located in the rights-of-way, any disruption would be the responsibility of the property owner to correct. The CCU inspector and contractor will discuss the situation with you at the time of construction and the result will become a part of the signed agreement.

I have an irrigation system located on my property, what will happen if it is damaged?

CCU staff will discuss this matter with you during the initial site meeting with you. Every effort will be made to locate the irrigation lines and avoid them if possible. Any damage to irrigation systems on private property will be repaired to original condition by CCU. The final agreement will document exactly how this matter will be addressed during the construction.

Can anything (sidewalk, landscaping, etc.) be installed over the new or abandoned on-lot sewer facilities?

Yes, that is a possibility. Please discuss this in detail with the CCU staff during the site visit with you.

Can my existing septic tank be converted to a cistern?

Yes, that is possible. The septic tank will need to be properly disinfected and all other pertinent regulations followed. If the property owner elects to keep the existing septic tank intact, any future costs associated with maintaining or abandoning the tank will be the responsibility of the property owner. Contact the Department of Health at 941.743.1266 for any requirements.

Can I reuse or resell any components of my existing septic system?

Most standard septic tanks do not have any mechanical components. If you have an Aerobic Treatment Unit (ATU) or mound system, salvage may be possible but must be done in conformance with all rules and regulations. Removal and reuse of the tank itself would be difficult. If you would like to consider keeping any components of your existing system, please discuss with CCU staff during your site meeting. The removal and/or reuse of any part of the on-site system cannot interfere in any way with the construction of the wastewater system.

When will I have to start paying for wastewater service and how much will it cost me?

Once your home is connected to the central sewer system you will be required to pay the monthly wastewater service charge. For an average customer using 3,000 gallons of water per month, the bill would be approximately \$45 monthly.

Will grant funding lower my assessment?

The grants are already built into the current MSBU assessment.

What is offered to undeveloped/vacant lot owners for hardship?

There is no approved Hardship Program for undeveloped/vacant lots. Resolution 2014-171, Exhibit A, II. Eligibility A. Home Ownership list several factors that must be true and one of those is that the program is for developed properties that have an approved homestead exemption for the current year. Undeveloped/vacant lots would not qualify for this requirement.

Can I construct a porous surface driveway in the future?

A solid drive surface is required in the rights-of-way. The material used can be concrete, asphalt and pavers. Paver drive surfaces are considered a solid surface and are somewhat porous. Many different types of drive surfaces are allowed on private property.

Has the water quality improved in the harbor over the last 10 years? How will taking septic systems out in Spring Lake make a difference for water quality in the harbor?

The water quality in the harbor has actually degraded over the last 10 years causing the harbor to be classified in 2009 as an impaired water body under Federal and State regulations.

Can swales be planted with anything other than sod when being restored?

No.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

Please contact Charlotte County Utilities at 941-764-4300 Ext.3.