NOVATO SANITARY DISTRICT

Lateral Replacement Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is a Sewer Lateral?

Response: Within the Novato Sanitary District (NSD), the sewer lateral is the portion of the sewer system, typically beginning at the junction with a house/building plumbing system, usually located within two (2) feet of the foundation of the house/building, and extending to and including the connection to the public sewer main in the street.

2. Why should the sewer lateral matter to me?

Response: The sewer lateral is the private property of the property owner who is therefore responsible for all costs relating to the installation, connection, maintenance, repair, construction, alteration, abandonment or removal of the sewer lateral.

3. Why does my private sewer lateral matter to NSD?

Response: In winter, old and leaky sewer laterals are often a significant source of rainwater infiltration and inflow (or "I/I") that can quickly overwhelm public sewer systems and result in sewage spills and overflows. By fixing or replacing older, leaky sewer laterals, rainwater "I/I" into the public sewer system from laterals can be reduced or potentially eliminated. Also, tree roots enter cracks in the laterals and can extend into the sewer blocking the flow in the sewer as well as the lateral.

4. What is the upper lateral? What is the lower lateral?

Response: The upper lateral is the portion of your sewer lateral that runs from the junction of your house/building plumbing system, to your property line or the public right-of-way. The lower lateral is the portion that connects your upper lateral to the public sewer main, including the point of connection.

5. Do I qualify for the grant?

Response: Each year, the District allocates a fixed amount of money for the Lateral Grant Program. For FY 23-24 the amount is $80,000. Grants will be made on a first-come-first served basis until the $80,000 amount is disbursed.

6. What is the maximum grant amount to an individual property owner?

Response: The maximum grant amount to an individual property owner is half the cost of the **full** lateral replacement, up to $2,500. Note: to qualify for the grant, you are required to replace the lateral in its entirety. (ie. **both the upper and lower laterals**.)

7. What do I need to do to obtain the grant amount?

Response: Complete the attached application form and return it to the District office. A District representative will contact you with further details, including a "letter of obligation" advising if your application has been accepted. Please do not have any work performed prior to receiving a letter of obligation. Any repair work performed prior to receiving a letter of obligation from NSD is performed at your own risk and cost, and will make the grant application null and void.

8. Who can perform the work to replace my lateral?

Response: Generally speaking, you will be able to select and hire the contractor that you wish to perform the work. We require that you obtain at least three bids for the work and include that information in Section III of the application form before returning.

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