



City of Marco Island

Sewer Connection Process

What if my septic system works fine do I have to hook-up? Yes. Section 18-80 of the City of Marco Island Code of Ordinances requires that all homeowners who are currently on a septic system must connect to the new sewer system within 365 days of the “Notice of Availability”. The only exception is for those owners who have an Advanced System permitted by the Collier County Health Department.

When does the required 365 day-connection period start? In this package is a “Notice of Availability” letter dated with the official date your 365 days begins.

What if I am not on Marco Island right now, do I still have to hook-up within 365 days? Yes, but you do not need to be home for the plumbing connection to occur. If you select Option 1 and agree to have the City connect your home to the sewer system, the City’s plumber will contact you by phone and make all the arrangements to hook up your home and abandon your septic tank without the need to access your house.

How long will I be without the use of my home plumbing facilities during the connection work? In most cases, only a couple hours. The plumber (City’s or private) will typically install all the piping from the right-of-way (ROW) cleanout to the house first, while you are still hooked up to the septic tank. Once this is done, the plumber will ask that the homeowner not run any water or flush any toilets for an hour or two while the septic tank is disconnected and the new sewer connection is made.

Why do I have to do anything with my septic tank once I am hooked up to sewer? Can I just leave it in place? Removal of septic tanks is not necessary; however, the State Health Department requires proper abandonment. State Statutes and the Florida Administrative Code FAC 64E-6 that govern septic systems require that septic tanks be properly abandoned by being pumped, crushed and filled by a state certified septic tank contractor.

Why would I want the City to connect my home to the sewer system? The sewer connection process requires hiring a licensed plumber, a licensed septic contractor, obtaining permits from the City and the Collier County Health Department and coordinating all of these activities to work together. This will be time consuming and stressful. Choosing OPTION 1 will allow the City to assume all of these duties on behalf of the homeowner. In addition, the City is providing very reasonable rates for this work due to the bulk amount of proposed work.

How quickly can I get my home hooked up to sewer? The City’s plumbing contractor will be doing all the scheduling, and will likely schedule several homes on one street at a time. The sooner you complete and submit your request, the sooner the plumber can schedule your connection. In most cases, all connection should be completed by the end on June 2008. The City plumber will contact the owner by phone to schedule the connection date. The contractor’s phone number is 239-437-0123.

Who will be working for the City on my property? Are they trustworthy? If you choose OPTION 1, the plumber working on your property will be Rohaley and Sons. The City has bid out the sewer connection and septic tank abandonment work through the public bid process, and has retained the services of Rohaley and Sons who will be performing connections and abandonment for the sewer districts. Their qualifications and references have been reviewed and they have experience in plumbing, septic tank work and landscape restoration.

What will happen to my front yard landscaping when the connection is made? If you select Option 1 and agree to have the City connect your home to the sewer system, the City’s plumber / septic tank contractor will make every effort to protect the sod and shrubbery (if needed) during their removal. Lateral trenches will be hand dug in most cases and original sod and shrubs will be replanted or replaced immediately after the City inspects the lateral. For the tank abandonment, hand digging and some machine excavation may be needed, however clean backfill will be installed to grade and the tank area will have sod planted or replaced.

How much will the OPTION 1 connection and abandonment cost? If you chose OPTION 1, we estimate that most homes will be invoiced between \$1800 to \$2200. However, depending on the length of the lateral and number of septic tanks your cost may vary. You can estimate the cost for your home by reviewing the City’s Plumber / Septic contractor Rate Schedule attached to the Sewer Connection Application Standard Terms and Conditions.

When will the connection cost be billed and how do I pay for this? If you chose OPTION 1, the costs to connect your home to sewer and abandon your septic tank will be billed to the home owner through a special invoice in your regular utility bill. This invoice will not be sent until all the work is completed, inspected by the City and billed to the City by the contractor. This will likely occur a month after the work is done. Payment of this special invoice is due within 30 days of receipt.

If I select OPTION 2 how much will the connection and abandonment cost? This depends on who you hire. Obtaining quotes from plumbers and septic tank contractors can help you determine your cost, the best price and the services they provide.

If I select OPTION 2, how will my front yard landscaping be handled when the connection is made and septic tank abandoned? This is completely dependant on who you hire and their ability to deal with the restoration issue. Most plumbers or septic contractors do not typically deal with landscaping issues. You may need to hire a landscaper to deal with any special landscaping conditions or restoration.

What if I want to connect the sewer to my house myself, can I install my own plumbing? An Owner/Builder may install the plumbing from the cleanout at the sidewalk to the house as long as the ALL the following criteria are met: 1) Must be Owner of record; 2) City Permit is required; 3) Owner/Builder must do the work themselves (no subs allowed); 4) City inspection is required (Owner/Builder must be present); 5) Work must meet City plumbing code. (Refer to www.floridabuilding.org); *Note: Septic tank abandonment MUST be performed by state certified septic contractor. Only some plumbers are certified for this work.*

Why would I want to assume responsibility for connecting my house to the sewer system? Reasons will vary with each home owner, however here are a few to consider. You may want to use a private plumber if you are having other plumbing or remodeling work done at this time. You may want do your own connection if you intend to abandon your septic tank by any other method than the “pump, crush & fill” method. You may want to handle your own connection if you plan to re-landscape your yard where the tank and drainfield currently exist. You may want to coordinate your own hook up if you plan to build where the old tank was located.

How do I know if my septic system is eligible for the 10-year connection waiver? You must have a septic system that requires an “Annual Operating Permit” from the Collier County Health Department. This permit is renewed every year for \$200 and you must provide a copy of the current year’s permit to the City. There are currently only 200 of these systems on Marco Island according to the Health Dept.

What if I think my septic system might qualify for the waiver but do not have an “Annual Operating Permit”? You will need to contact the Collier County Health Department, 239-403-2499.

What does “crushing” a septic tank mean? The State has a set standard for abandonment of septic tanks. The tank is pumped out by a licensed contractor and then the bottom is ruptured. The lid and one or more sides are broken down or “crushed” into the bottom of it. The void in the yard is then backfilled with clean soil to grade.

Will there be any odors from the connection process? Not during the plumbing hookup, but there may be odors during the septic tank pumping and abandonment. The contractors will usually spread lime to mitigate any odors. The duration will be brief and eliminated when the tank excavation is backfilled.

Does the plumber need to use my water supply while on my property? Yes, but usually only a few gallons from the outside hose bib to help compact your soil and sod during the hookup and abandonment. There is no need for large quantities of water to do the work.

How many people will be on my property at one time? Typically from 3-5 people will be on your property at any given time. These will generally include a combination of a 3-person plumbing crew, plumbing supervisor, City Plumbing Inspector, and/or a City Public Works inspector.

Is it necessary to remove the Septic Drainfield from my yard? No. The Health Department does not require drainfield removal for proper abandonment.

When will monthly billing for wastewater service begin and what is the utility rate for wastewater? Billing for wastewater service for developed properties will begin when the property is connected and or 365 days following the notification of availability of the new sewer line. Once connected to the new system, the monthly utility bill for wastewater service will consist of two components-the base charge and the gallon usage charge. The current base charge is \$22.72 and the current gallon usage charge is \$4.50 per 1,000 gallons of water used up to a maximum of 6,000 gallons.

Can I have a backflow preventer installed in my service connection line? No. The Florida Plumbing Code does not allow back flow prevention devices to be installed where there are no basements. The manhole lids in the street are lower than the lowest sanitary connection inside a house.

What if I own a vacant lot, do I have to do anything for connection now? No. If your property is not developed, there is no need to do anything regarding the connection process at this time. When you build, the sewer connection will become part of your building permit.

What if I ignore this mailing and just do nothing? If your connection is not completed by the date mentioned in the attached letter, a “Notice of Violation” will be issued by Code Enforcement and appropriate legal action will commence.