

Can I plant or build something in the sewer right of way?

If you have a sewer right of way on your property, the Sewer Authority asks that you not plant or build anything within its boundaries. The Sewer Authority may, at some point in the future, have to perform work within that right of way at which point, your plantings or structure would be in the way. The removal of your planting or building will cost the Authority excess time and money and will delay our ability to handle an emergency in a timely manner.

It is important to note that if the Sewer Authority needs to remove something that you have built or planted within the right of way, the Sewer Authority will not pay to replace, repair or rebuild it.

Why can't I plant something in the sewer right of way?

Another reason for not allowing property owners to plant anything within the boundaries of the sewer right of way is because the roots of your planting will find their way into our sewer system. Plant roots, especially trees and large shrubs, are very adept at breaking into a sewer pipe (photo 1) in order to access the water that flows within it. Once inside the pipe, the roots grow at a rapid pace and will cause a blockage within the pipe that the sewage cannot flow around (photo 2). This blockage will cause a backup within our system which could cause property damage to local property owners. Once a tree root becomes big enough, it will cause the pipe to crack and break (photo 3) which will allow ground water to flow into our system and force the Authority to excavate the area and replace the damaged section of sewer main. This is a major expense to the Authority which is ultimately reflected in the quarterly sewer bill you pay.

Please note, the Authority highly recommends that property owners not plant trees or shrubs over their sewer lateral located in their yard for the same reasons stated above. Any repair to or replacement of the sewer lateral is at the expense of the property owner because the property owner owns the sewer lateral.

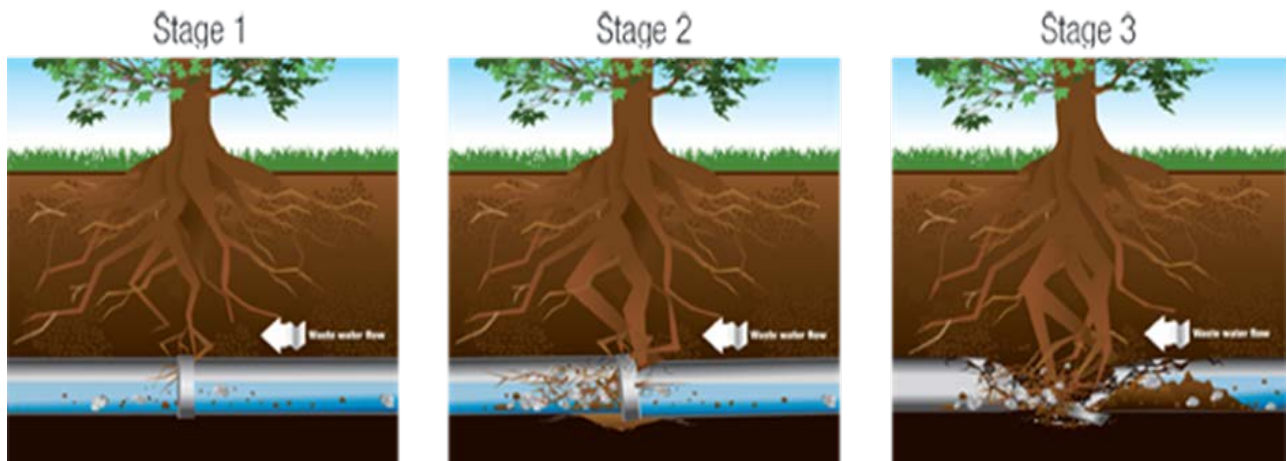


Photo 1 shows how a tree or shrub root enters a sewer pipe (Stage 1), how it causes a blockage in a sewer pipe (Stage 2) and how it will ultimately break the sewer pipe (Stage 3).



Photo 2 shows a tree root breaking through the walls of a sewer pipe and filling the entire inside within just 10 short months. You can see how this tree root ball does not allow anything to flow past it.



Photo 3 shows a tree root wrapping around a sewer pipe and squeezing it to the point of collapse.

How do I know if I have a sewer right of way on my property?

If you are unsure whether or not you have a sewer right of way on your property, please contact the Authority Manager, Patty Smith, at the Authority office and she will be happy to help you. Manager Smith can be reached via telephone at 545-0116 or via email at stamanager@susqtow.comcastbiz.net or can be reached in person at the Authority office located within the Township building. Please note that the Authority does not know the location of the sewer lateral in your yard.