Guidelines for Contractors

EAST BAY REGIONAL **PRIVATE SEWER LATERAL** PROGRAM

These guidelines provide information about private sewer lateral (PSL) testing requirements and procedures to enable plumbing contractors to help their customers meet Regional Private Sewer Lateral Program requirements and obtain a Compliance Certificate.

Regional PSL Program Requirements Overview

Repairing or replacing old cracked PSLs ensures that rainwater does not enter the sanitary sewer system during storms. Too much rainwater can overwhelm the sanitary sewer system, allowing partially treated sewage to flow into the Bay. Visit www.ebmud.com/psl for more information.

To address this problem, the Regional PSL Program requires property owners to obtain a Compliance Certificate from EBMUD indicating that all PSLs associated with their parcel have demonstrated compliance with applicable standards. It is recommended that the condition of each PSL first be assessed to determine what work is required. Then the PSLs must be repaired or replaced, as necessary, and pass an air or water Verification Test that will be witnessed by an EBMUD inspector in order to obtain a Compliance Certificate.

The program applies to property owners who sell their property, build or remodel in excess of $100,000, or change the size of their water meter. The program requires that PSLs be repaired or replaced as necessary, and pass an air or water verification test.

When the PSL passes the test, a Compliance Certificate will be issued by EBMUD as proof that the pipe is free of leaks. Compliance Certificates are required for the property owner to transfer title, obtain final building permit sign-off, or have an EBMUD work order processed for a change in water meter size.

Property owners will need to work with a contractor to assess the condition of their lateral(s), have any required repair work done, and prepare the PSL for the air or water verification test that will be witnessed by an EBMUD inspector.

Who is affected?

The program applies to residential, commercial and industrial property owners in EBMUD's wastewater service area in Alameda, Albany, Emeryville, Oakland, Piedmont, and the Stege Sanitary District which serves Kensington, El Cerrito and the Richmond Annex. The city of Berkeley operates its own program: please see https://www.cityofberkeley.info/psl/.

When does the Regional PSL Program take effect?

The Regional PSL Program began in August 2011 and was phased in through January 2015. Effective dates for each community are posted at www.ebmud.com/psl. The Program has been updated with new requirements effective May 24, 2019. Please see the website for the latest information.

When will a Compliance Certificate expire?

PSLs that are completely replaced and that successfully pass a verification test will receive a Compliance Certificate that is valid for 20 years. PSLs that are repaired and that successfully pass a verification test will receive a Compliance Certificate that is valid for 7 years.

What do "repair" and "replacement" mean?

A repair is a correction of an isolated defect of the PSL. A replacement is installation of a new pipe along the entire length of the PSL or lining of the entire length of the PSL.

Guidelines

Step 1: Check Parcel Information and Number of Laterals

A Compliance Certificate is issued when *all* PSLs associated with a *parcel* pass the verification test. If the parcel contains a sewer pipe system or multiple laterals, the entire sewer pipe system, including private manholes and other appurtenances, must be tested. Obtain parcel information including parcel address, number, and boundary. Determine the total number of laterals and private manholes (if any) in the parcel. (Note: if there are private sewer mains or manholes on the parcel, please refer to the Guidelines for Main and Manhole Testing at www.ebmud.com/psl).

Step 2: Check Lateral Condition

Check the lateral for leaks or other defects and advise the property owner if work is needed. Check to ensure there are no non-sanitary sewer connections (i.e., no connections from downspouts or sump pumps, etc.) to the sanitary sewer lateral; sewer laterals should convey sewage and liquid waste only. If no work is required, proceed to Step 5, with the exception of Emeryville where step 3 is required to obtain a permit even if no work is needed (i.e., a test as-is scenario).

NOTE: During the installation of new gas lines by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), some private sewer laterals may have been pierced or completely bored through – known as a cross bore. Underground Service Alert does not typically mark private sewer laterals and as a result, cross bores may go undetected, and if damaged create a potentially hazardous situation. For gas line cross bore information, visit PG&E's website at http://www.pge.com/myhome/edusafety/gaselectricsafety/sewercleaningsafety/. If you suspect a gas line cross bore, call PG&E at 1-800-743-5000. If you suspect a gas leak, warn inhabitants, evacuate the area and call 911 and PG&E at 1-800-743-5000.

Step 3: Obtain Required Municipal Permits

Appropriate building and/or sewer permits must be obtained before beginning PSL repair or replacement. PSL repair, replacement, and testing must be performed in accordance with local ordinance requirements and the Regional PSL Program Ordinance, which is available online at http://www.eastbaypsl.com. For local ordinance and permit requirements, contact the agency where work is being performed. For properties in the City of Emeryville a permit is required even when no work will be performed (i.e., in a test as-is scenario). If excavation is needed, call 811 or visit https://usanorth811.org / to get a ticket from USA North 811at least two working days before you dig.

City of Alameda	(510) 747-7930
City of Albany	(510) 528-5760
City of Emeryville Building Department	(510) 596-4310
City of Oakland	(510) 238-3891
City of Piedmont Public Works Department	(510) 420-3050
Stege Sanitary District	(510) 524-4668

Step 4: Complete Required Work

Complete any required work to bring the PSL into compliance. If you accidentally break an EBMUD water main, please call EBMUD at 1-866-403-2683 to report it immediately.

Step 5: Schedule an Inspection with EBMUD and Pay Compliance Certificate Fee on behalf of the Property Owner

After work on the PSL is completed, go online to www.ebmud.com/psl to schedule an inspection for EBMUD to witness a water or air pressure verification test on the entire lateral except in Alameda and Albany where only the upper lateral needs to be tested. Use a credit card to pay the Compliance

Certificate fee. You may also pay by cash or check at the EBMUD New Business Office at 375 11th Street, First Floor, Oakland, CA 94607.

Contractors may be required to provide the mailing address and email of the property owner when the appointment is scheduled.

Contractors must be ready to conduct the verification test at the beginning of the inspection appointment window. Contractors who are not prepared will be required to reschedule the inspection and be charged a rescheduling fee.

For a multi-lateral parcel (i.e., more than one lateral in the parcel) or a parcel within a Homeowner's Association (HOA), the contractor must provide a map showing all laterals, private mains, and private manholes of the parcel or parcel group to EBMUD prior to scheduling an inspection. Please call the PSL Program at (510) 287-1599 to schedule a multi-lateral or HOA inspection.

For Port of Oakland properties and properties in Alameda Point, an EBMUD form must be submitted and the inspection request must be reviewed and approved by EBMUD prior to scheduling an inspection. Please call (510) 287-1599 for more information.

Step 6: Set Up Water or Air Verification Test

Choose either a hydrostatic (water) test or a low-pressure air test on the lateral to demonstrate that the PSL meets the Regional PSL Program compliance requirements (see verification test setups, below). To set up a valid test, the PSL must be connected to the sewer main or manhole. Plugging or capping the PSL close to the main or manhole without connection is considered a test set up failure.

For new construction, the foundation of all structures must be in place along with all lateral(s) and cleanout(s).

An abandoned sewer lateral, or part thereof, shall be sealed in an approved manner (check City requirements). All open ends of the abandoned sewer lateral shall be sealed to reduce water inflow into the sewer system.

Step 7: Pass Water or Air Verification Test

A PSL meets the Regional PSL compliance requirements when one of the following criteria is met:

Test Type	Passing Criteria
Hydrostatic (water) Test	There is no observable water level loss in a 5-foot (60 inch) standpipe after 5 minutes.
Low Pressure Air Test	Pressure cannot drop more than one psi in 5 minutes (the minimum starting pressure is 3.5 psi).

Note: Parcels within the City of Alameda and the City of Albany are only responsible for the upper sewer lateral. During inspection, contractors must inform EBMUD inspector about the public sewer main location. If the location is not illustrated on the sewer map, contractors will be asked to provide further verification of public sewer main location before a Compliance Certificate is issued.

Step 8: Print or Download Compliance Certificate

After the PSL passes a water or air verification test, a Compliance Certificate will be available for the property owner to print or download from any computer with internet access at www.ebmud.com/psl.

Program Audits

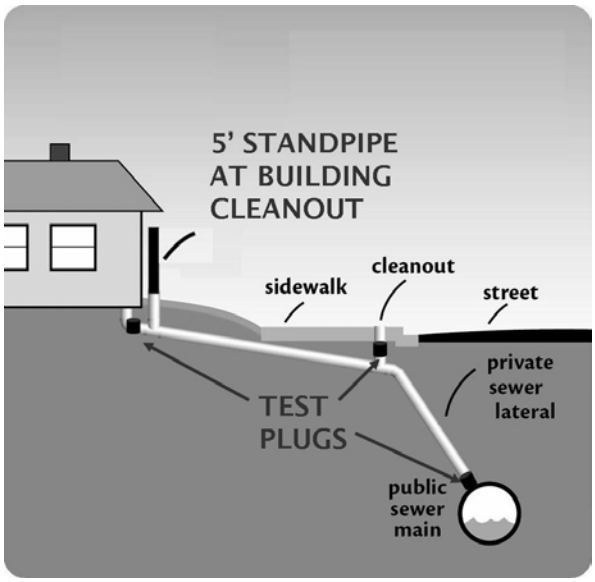
To ensure that verification tests are conducted in accordance with these guidelines and that results are accurately reported, EBMUD will be conducting audits. EBMUD may conduct on-site audits of contractor test documentation and/or re-test selected laterals using EBMUD staff or other contractors. Enforcement action may be taken against contractors who are found to have falsified test results to obtain a Compliance Certificate.

Verification Test Setups

Hydrostatic Water Test

The contractor shall provide all materials and equipment necessary to conduct the test. The test assembly shall include the following equipment:

- Appropriate pipe test plugs and caps to be used during lateral testing.
- A standpipe that can be connected to the building cleanout riser to allow a pressure head of 5 feet (60 inches) above the **highest point** of the lateral section being tested. The diameter of the standpipe shall be no greater than 4 inches and no less than 2 inches.



Hydrostatic Water Test Setup

The upper lateral is the portion of the lateral from the building to the cleanout near the curb line, or from the building to the curb line if there is no cleanout near the curb line.

The lower lateral is the portion of the lateral from the cleanout near the curb line to the sewer main, or from the curb line to the sewer main if there is no cleanout near the curb line.

Testing Procedure

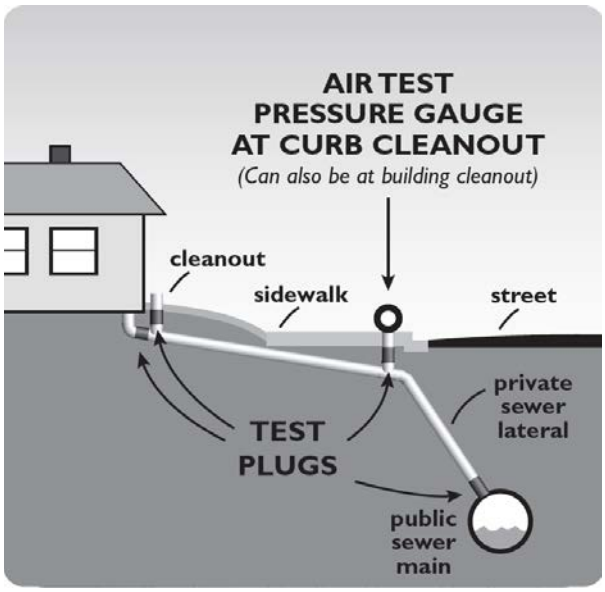
- The entire lateral must be tested, except for parcels in the Cities of Alameda and Albany, which require upper sewer lateral testing only. To test the upper lateral only, plug the sewer lateral immediately downstream of the curb cleanout, if present (i.e., the curb cleanout must be included in the test). If there is no curb cleanout, plug the lateral at the street curb line. To test the full lateral, plug the sewer lateral as close to the building as possible upstream of the cleanout (typically within 2 feet from the building foundation) and immediately upstream of the connection to the sewer main. It is recommended to plug the building cleanout first in order to avoid sewage being accumulated in the lateral during test set up. If needed, a wye connection may be installed for the insertion of a testing plug in the lateral just above the joint at the public sewer main (check City requirements.) After the test is complete, the wye should be capped and buried. If there is a curb or property line cleanout present, plug the cleanout riser using an airtight cleanout cover or plug located near the top of the cleanout riser. *Failure to bleed the air out of the cleanout riser while filling the pipe with water may result in a failed test.*

- Install a temporary standpipe at the building cleanout with the open end 5 feet (60 inches) above the highest point of the PSL section being tested.
- Fill the standpipe with water and monitor it for at least 5 minutes or until the water level becomes stable. Add water as needed to maintain 5 feet of head at the top of the standpipe. The water level is stable when there is no observed drop in the water level of the standpipe.
- Begin the test. No water may be added to the standpipe once the test has started.
- After 5 minutes, the contractor will be asked to remove the test assembly for the EBMUD inspector to verify if the test was set up properly. Mark the plug hose at the point it enters the sewer, deflate the plug and remove the plug and hose assembly. The inspector will measure the length from the mark to the end of the plug to ensure the entire lateral was tested.
- If you have lost a testing plug to the sewer main, notify the local agency where work is being performed immediately. A runaway plug may block the sewer system and cause an overflow.
- The lateral passes the test if there is no observable water loss at the top of the 5 foot standpipe after 5 minutes.

Low Pressure Air Test

The contractor shall provide all materials and equipment necessary to conduct the test. The test assembly shall include the following equipment:

- Appropriate pipe test plugs and caps to be used during lateral testing.
- A test assembly that allows the application of pressurized air to the pipe being tested, provides connections for the air pressure gauge, and includes a 3/8" female pipe thread connection to allow a second pressure test gauge to be connected in parallel to the pressure test gauge.
- A pressure test gauge that is in good working order and has a range of 0 to 10 pounds per square inch (psi) that **can be accurately read to 0.1 psi**.
- A reliable source of pressurized air with a pressure regulator as needed to conduct the test. The pressure regulator can be set to alert field workers of problems when high pressure conditions exceed pre-determined safety levels.



Low Pressure Air Test Setup

Upper lateral is the portion of the lateral from the building to the cleanout near the curb line, or from the building to the curb line if there is no cleanout near the curb line.

The lower lateral is the portion of the lateral from the cleanout near the curb line to the sewer main, or from the curb line to the sewer main if there is no cleanout near the curb line.

Testing Procedure

- The entire lateral must be tested, except for parcels in the Cities of Alameda and Albany, which requires upper sewer lateral testing only. To test the upper lateral only, plug the sewer lateral immediately downstream of the curb cleanout, if present (i.e., the curb cleanout must be included in the test). If there is no curb cleanout, plug the lateral at the street curb line. To test the full lateral, plug the sewer lateral as close to the building as possible upstream of the cleanout (typically within 2 feet from the building foundation) and immediately upstream of the connection to the sewer main. It is recommended to plug the building cleanout first in order to avoid sewage being accumulated in the lateral during test set up. If needed, a wye connection may be installed for the insertion of a testing plug in the lateral just above the joint at the public sewer main (check City requirements). After the test is complete, the wye should be capped and buried. If there is a curb or property line cleanout present, plug the cleanout riser using an airtight cleanout cover or plug located near the top of the cleanout riser.
- Apply pressurized air to the test assembly and raise the internal pressure to approximately 4 psi. Pressure may be applied from either end of the lateral.
- Maintain the internal air pressure between 3.5 and 4.0 psi for at least two minutes to allow the air pressure and internal temperature to stabilize. The minimum starting pressure is 3.5 psi.
- Disconnect the pressurized air supply and begin timing the test. No additional air may be added once the test has started.
- After 5 minutes, the contractor will be asked to remove the test assembly for an EBMUD inspector to verify if the test was set up properly. Mark the plug hose at the point it enters the sewer, deflate the plug and remove the plug and hose assembly. The inspector will measure the length from the mark to the end of the plug to ensure the entire lateral was tested.
- If you have lost a testing plug to the sewer main, notify the local agency where work is being performed immediately. A runaway plug may block the sewer system and cause overflow.
- The lateral passes the test if the pressure does not drop more than one psi in 5 minutes.

Note: A property owner or his/her representative may request that EBMUD waive the verification test requirement if the PSL cannot physically be tested in accordance with EBMUD's verification test procedures. In response to such a request, EBMUD may waive or modify the verification test requirement if sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate that the test cannot be performed *and* the PSL meets ordinance requirements. Waiving the verification test expressly requires PSL Program Manager approval. For additional information go to www.ebmud.com/psl.