



GAIL FARBER, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

February 16, 2010

IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE:

SM-1

Current Property Owner  
1254 Long Road  
Alhambra, CA 91802

Dear Property Owner:

### **SEWER LATERAL ROOT INTRUSION 1254 LONG ROAD, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802**

As the agency responsible for the maintenance of the sanitary sewer system in your area, the County of Los Angeles Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (District) is providing you with this letter informing you that the sewer lateral serving the property located at 6435 Golden West Avenue, Temple City, California 91780, requires maintenance and is in violation of **County Code 20.24.080 Maintenance of Sewer Laterals**, which states:

***"All house laterals, industrial connection sewers, septic tank outlet connections to STEP system, and appurtenances thereto existing as of January 23, 1953, or thereafter constructed, shall be maintained by the owner of the property served in a safe and sanitary condition, and all devices or safeguards which are required by this Division 2 for the operation thereof shall be maintained in good working order."***

Using closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera technology, the District recently televised the sanitary sewer mainline and discovered the presence of roots in your sewer lateral connection. The intrusion of the roots from your lateral may block the flow of sewage in the mainline sewer causing a sanitary sewer overflow upstream of your property.

Since the CCTV inspection, the sewer mainline has been cleaned and blockages from root growth have been removed; however, the root blockage in your sewer lateral is still present. As the property owner, you are responsible for the entire length of the sewer lateral, which includes that portion that extends beyond the property line into the public right of way. We request that you contact a qualified plumbing contractor to service

your sewer lateral within 90 days to remove roots and any other obstructions that may cause a sewage backup. Failure to do so may result in future overflows and subject you to civil prosecution, reimbursement costs, and fines up to \$1,000. Reference 20.24.160 Violation - Penalty; 20.24.170 Continued violations; 20.32.690 Reimbursement for repairs and maintenance following violations.

During your lateral maintenance process, the District's sewer mainlines must be protected from dislodged roots and other debris by utilizing catcher baskets at the manhole downstream from your lateral connection. Prior to your plumbing contractor beginning the maintenance, please notify the District's sewer maintenance yard in your area at (626) XXX-XXXX to arrange for authorization to access the downstream manhole.

For your reference, we have enclosed photos of your lateral connection showing the presence of the root blockage. Also enclosed are some literature on ways of minimizing sewer overflows and damage to your home.

Thank you for helping the Department of Public Works keep the public's sewers clean and in good working order. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Robert Swartz, Sewer Maintenance Division, at (626) 300-3367 or [rswartz@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:rswartz@dpw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

GAIL FARBER  
Director of Public Works

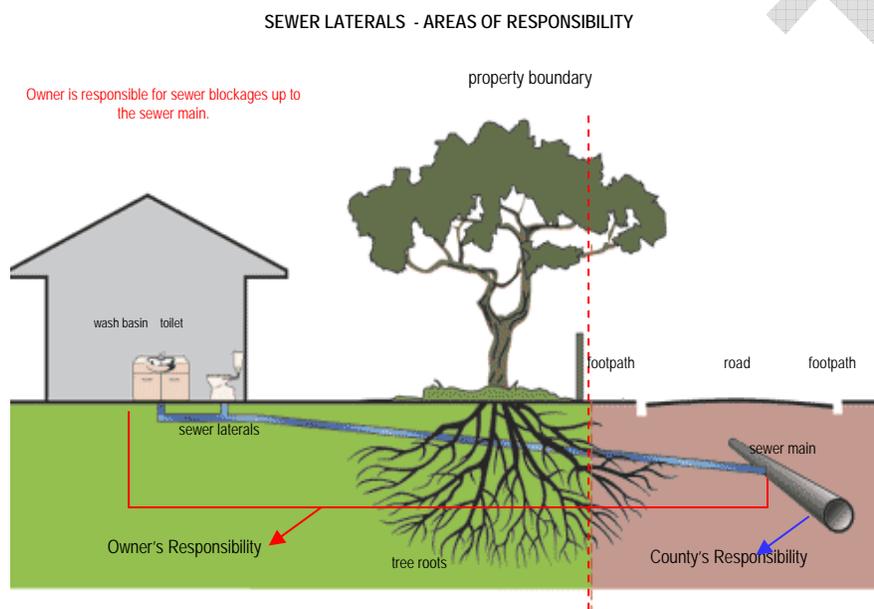
JOHN T. WALKER  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Sewer Maintenance Division

**1254 LONG ROAD  
ALHAMBRA**  
Roots at Lateral Connection



## Minimizing Sewer Overflows and Damage to Your Home

The sewer system within the County of Los Angeles Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (District) is comprised of a series of underground pipes. Many are publicly owned; however, the sewer laterals are entirely owned by the private property owner they serve. The laterals extend from the building to the mainline within the street (or within an easement at the rear of your home). The laterals are typically four inches in diameter while the District's mainline is typically at least eight inches in diameter. The private property owner is responsible for the entire length of the lateral, which includes that portion that may be located within the public right of way (under the asphalt and street landscaping).



Sewer backups can cause tremendous damage to the interior of a home. In order to minimize these, the District provides continual maintenance services for the public sewer mainlines.

Unfortunately, sewer laterals are often not maintained by private property owners until a disaster strikes. "Out of sight, out of mind" is a typical approach to sewer lateral maintenance and operation by many. It is our hope that we can provide you various means of addressing these issues and thus minimize your risk of an overflow entering your home.

The three methods we suggest are:

1. Maintain your lateral through proper cleaning, repair, and replacement
2. Do not place improper items into the sewer or make improper connections to the sewer
  - a. Keep rainwater out of the sewer lines as it overwhelms the capacity of the sewer lines and may cause sewer spills.

- b. Do not pour fats, oils, and grease in your drains as these products harden and stick to the inside of the sewer pipes, which build up and may eventually cause a blockage in the sewer pipe.
3. Install a backflow preventer and cleanout in your sewer lateral.

**SAMPLE**