

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

BILL: SB 1058

INTRODUCER: Senator Burgess

SUBJECT: Sanitary Sewer Lateral Inspection Programs

DATE: March 12, 2021

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Anderson	Rogers	EN	Pre-meeting
2.			AEG	
3.			AP	

I. Summary:

SB 1058 authorizes counties and municipalities to access any sanitary sewer lateral within their jurisdictions to investigate, clean, repair, recondition, or replace the sanitary sewer lateral.

The bill adds to and revises the discretionary minimum program requirements for counties and municipalities that establish an evaluation and rehabilitation program for sanitary sewer laterals on residential and commercial properties. For counties and municipalities that identify a defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer lateral and initiate a program to eliminate extraneous flow, the bill:

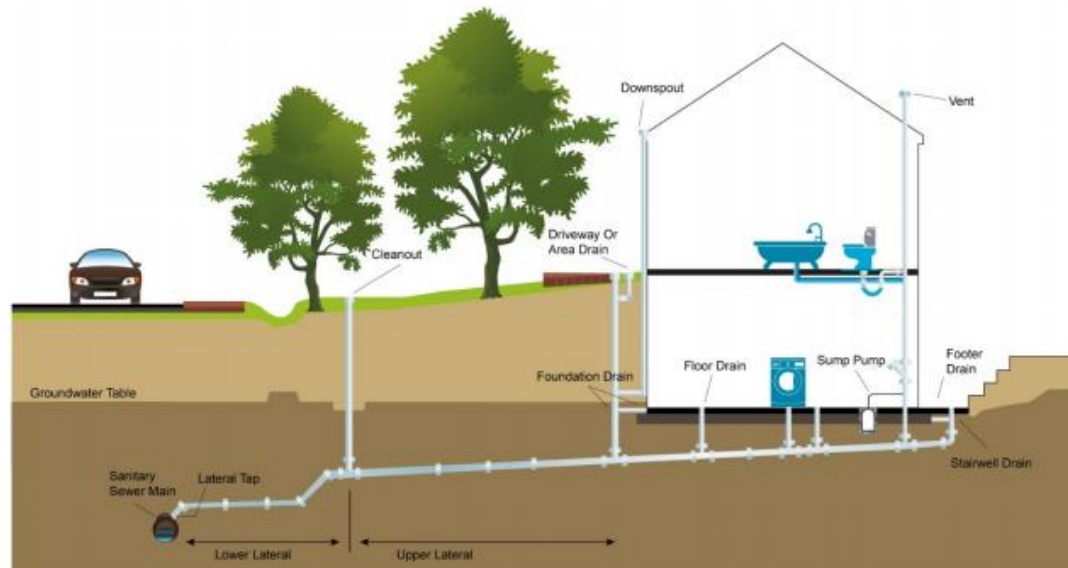
- Requires mailed notice by the county or municipality to the property owner, specifying that the county or municipality intends to access the owner’s property within 14 days to address the sanitary sewer lateral.
- Provides that the county or municipality is responsible for any repair work done on the private property and is required to ensure that the property is restored to at least its pre-work conditions after the repair is complete.
- Requires that the repair work done to a sanitary sewer lateral by a county or municipality provide one continuous monolithic pipe system with connections for the structure, mainline, and cleanout installed and integrated into the continuous monolithic pipe system by a Florida licensed plumber; and be inspected using a lateral launch or similar CCTV camera system conducted by a Pipeline Assessment Certification Program (PACP) and Lateral Assessment and Certification Program (LACP)-certified camera operator.
- Authorizes the county or municipality to consider economical methods to repair or replace a defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer lateral.

The county or municipality may use state or local funds allocated for the purpose of environmental preservation or the protection of a clean water supply for a sanitary sewer lateral program.

II. Present Situation:

Sanitary Sewer Laterals

A private sanitary sewer lateral is an underground pipe that connects private plumbing systems to a public sewer network,¹ to convey wastewater from homes and businesses to wastewater treatment plants.² The diagram below shows an example of a sanitary sewer lateral configuration.³



Sanitary sewer laterals are often in poor condition and defects can occur due to aging systems, structural failure, lack of maintenance, or poor construction and design practices.⁴ Problems in sanitary sewer laterals can have a significant impact on the performance of the sewer system and treatment plant and can account for half of the infiltration and inflow to sanitary sewers.⁵ Cracked or broken laterals can allow groundwater and infiltrating rainwater to enter into the sewer system which, at high levels, can cause problems at the treatment facility or overload the sewers and cause sanitary sewer overflows.⁶

¹ See State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, *Design and Specifications Guidelines for Low Pressure Sewer Systems* at xi, available at https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/guide_lowpres.pdf (last visited Mar. 1, 2021).

² Water Environment Federation, *Sanitary Sewers* (May 2011), available at <https://www.wef.org/globalassets/assets-wef/3---resources/topics/a-n/collection-systems/technical-resources/ss-fact-sheet-with-wider-margins-1.pdf> (last visited Mar. 1, 2021).

³ Water Environment Federation, *Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Fact Sheet*, available at <https://www.wef.org/globalassets/assets-wef/direct-download-library/public/03---resources/wsec-2017-fs-009---csc---sewer-rehabilitation---final---9.27.17.pdf> (last visited Mar. 1, 2021).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Private Sewer Laterals* (Jun. 2014), available at <https://www3.epa.gov/region1/sso/pdfs/PrivateSewerLaterals.pdf> (last visited Mar. 1, 2021).

The Florida Building Code requires every building in which plumbing fixtures are installed to be connected to a publicly or investor-owned sewage system, or if none is available, then to an approved onsite sewage treatment and disposal system.⁷

There are no statewide requirements for inspections of sanitary sewer laterals. Generally, local governments are responsible for maintaining sewer mains and the portions of sewer laterals in public rights-of-way,⁸ but the property owner is responsible for the maintenance and repair of a sanitary sewer lateral on the person's private property.⁹

Sanitary Sewer Lateral Inspection Programs for Counties and Municipalities

A sanitary sewer lateral is defined in Florida law as “a privately owned pipeline connecting a property to the main sewer line which is maintained and repaired by the property owner.”¹⁰

Chapter 2020-158, Laws of Florida, encouraged counties and municipalities to establish an evaluation and rehabilitation program, by July 1, 2022, for sanitary sewer laterals on residential and commercial properties within the county's jurisdiction to identify and reduce extraneous flow from leaking sanitary sewer laterals.¹¹ Counties and municipalities that opt to establish such a program are authorized to do the following:

- Establish a system to identify defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer laterals on residential and commercial properties within the jurisdiction of the county;
- Consider economical methods for a property owner to repair or replace a defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer lateral; and
- Establish and maintain a publicly accessible database to store information concerning properties where a defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer lateral has been identified. For each property, the database must include, but is not limited to, the address of the property, the names of any persons the county notified concerning the faulty sanitary sewer lateral, and the date and method of such notification.¹²

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill amends ss. 125.569 and 166.0481, F.S., relating to counties and municipalities, respectively. The bill makes the following changes to both sections of law.

The bill defines the term “continuous monolithic pipe system” to mean a pipe system with no joints or seams anywhere, including all points where it connects to the structure, the mainline, and the cleanout.

The bill authorizes counties and municipalities to access any sanitary sewer lateral within its jurisdiction to investigate, clean, repair, recondition, or replace the sanitary sewer lateral.

⁷ Ch. 7, § 701.2 Florida Building Code – Plumbing 6th Edition (July 2017).

⁸ See, e.g., *Sewer Laterals*, http://www.beachapedia.org/Sewer_Laterals (last visited Mar. 1, 2021).

⁹ Sections 125.569 and 166.0481, F.S.

¹⁰ Chapter 2020-150, Laws of Fla.

¹¹ Sections 125.569 and 166.0481, F.S.

¹² *Id.*

The bill adds to and revises the discretionary minimum program requirements for counties and municipalities that establish an evaluation and rehabilitation program for sanitary sewer laterals on residential and commercial properties. For a county or municipality that identifies a defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer lateral and initiates a program to eliminate extraneous flow, the bill:

- Requires the county or municipality to notify the property owner of the issue by mail. The notice must specify that the county or municipality intends to access the owner's property within 14 days after receiving the notice to address the defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer lateral. The notice must identify the issue, inform the property owner that he or she will be indemnified and held harmless in the repair process, and provide a proposed timeline and plan for the duration of the project, including start and completion dates.
- Provides that the county or municipality is responsible for any repair work done on the private property. The bill requires the county or municipality to ensure that the property is restored to at least its pre-work conditions after the repair is complete if it is necessary to disrupt the property to access the sanitary sewer lateral.
- Requires that the repair work done to a sanitary sewer lateral by a county or municipality meets the following requirements:
 - Provide one continuous monolithic pipe system with connections for the structure, mainline, and cleanout installed and integrated into the continuous monolithic pipe system by a Florida licensed plumber; and
 - Be inspected using a lateral launch or similar CCTV camera system conducted by a Pipeline Assessment Certification Program (PACP) and Lateral Assessment and Certification Program (LACP)-certified camera operator. The contractor must produce and provide the county or municipality with a PACP- and LACP-certified report describing the conditions of the continuous monolithic pipe system and the connections to the main sewer pipe and structure.
- Authorizes the county or municipality to consider economical methods for the county or municipality, rather than the homeowner, to repair or replace a defective, damaged, or deteriorated sanitary sewer lateral.

The bill authorizes the county or municipality to use state or local funds allocated for the purpose of environmental preservation or the protection of a clean water supply for a sanitary sewer lateral program.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2021.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

The bill adds discretionary requirements to the evaluation and rehabilitation program that counties and municipalities may establish for sanitary sewer laterals. The bill is not a mandate because it does not require the expenditure of funds for the program.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

There may be difficulty in proving when or if a property owner has received mailed notice from the county or municipality under the bill as written in lines 52-54 and 118-120. To address this concern, the language on lines 52 and 118 could be revised to read: "Shall notify the property owner of the issue by certified mail, return receipt requested."

It is unclear whether the phrase "the protection of a clean water supply" on lines 89-91 and lines 156-158 is meant to refer to state or local funds allocated for protection of water quality or water supply. This could be clarified by revising the language "the protection of a clean water supply" to "the protection of water quality" or "the protection of clean water."

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 125.569 and 166.0481.

IX. Additional Information:

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
