

Local Improvement Districts:

Generally, sanitary sewer extensions are constructed as areas annex into cities. In the past, we have been able to also extend our lines into areas of existing homes outside of cities and their urban growth boundaries. Failing septic systems have caused health concerns and connecting to our system has done much to make this valley a better place to live. In some instances, it may still be possible to extend our service lines into such areas. However, several land use laws limit this considerably. Someone who is having problems with their septic system should call our office so we can determine what may be able to be done. Providing such service helps to reduce health hazards and to improve the overall water quality of the valley.

I. How is a Sewer Project Formed?

A. Preliminary Steps

The property owners or residents of a neighborhood who may be experiencing on-going septic system problems or who wish sewer service should contact RVSS.

If these concerned citizens believe that sanitary sewer service is needed, they circulate a petition asking RVSS for information.

B. Project Start-Up

After receiving the petition, the RVSS Board can authorize staff to proceed with preliminary engineering, project evaluation, and approval from Jackson County. If the County approves such a project, the RVSS Board forms a Local Improvement District (LID). An LID allows RVSS to provide financing to property owners. An informational meeting is held so the property owners can ask questions of RVSS. A formal public hearing is also held describing all aspects of the project, including costs, in more detail. Methods for continuing or stopping the project are explained at these meetings.

C. Stopping the Project (Remonstrance)

If a majority of owners in the LID do not want sewer service, the project is abandoned. Two opportunities are given for people to "vote" against the project. To "vote," property owners must notify RVSS in writing that they do not want the project. Both before and for a thirty (30) day time period after the public hearing, property owners are given an opportunity to submit this written remonstrance.

If property owners of more than 50 percent of the project's assessed value during the first remonstrance period, or if more than 50 percent of the property owners during the second remonstrance period submit their objection in writing, the project is abandoned.

D. Project Approval - Construction

After these remonstrance periods, and once the project design details are finalized, the RVSS Board seeks bids for construction. However, if cost estimates increase by more than 10 percent, the property owners are asked again.

E. Completion

Final project cost is determined after construction is complete allowing final assessments to be made by the RVSS board. Hookups are made by individuals once notice is given that construction is completed.

II. How Long Before I Can Hook Up to Sewer?

The time period from beginning to end can vary considerably. The factors include project size and location, local support, time of year, ease of construction, and the current RVSS work load. Once the public hearings are over, construction is usually completed in six to eight months.

III. Financing

A. Who Pays for the Project?

The property owners benefiting from the new sewer service are assessed for the improvements and associated costs. RVSS may be able to help with unusual costs such as pumping stations and oversized lines.

B. How Much Will it Cost?

Costs for the overall project vary with project size and shape, distance from existing sewer, ease of digging, topography, and slope. Individual assessments usually depend on parcel size, number of hookups, zoning, and number of participants in the project. More specific information will be mailed to each property owner prior to the public hearing.

C. Are There Other Costs?

Yes, individual hook-ups (from the house to the new sewer line) are the responsibility of the landowner. A sewer permit will need to be acquired from RVSS. There is a one-time sewer permit charge and the Region systems development charges (SDC).

Finally, there will be the monthly sewer service charge billed by RVSS. Currently (July 2017) this is \$19.60 per month for a single family residence plus Stormwater fees and city Franchise fees.

D. Can I Finance My Assessment?

Yes. Municipal Bonds or other financing tools may allow a property owner to finance the assessment at a relatively low interest rate over a twenty (20) year period. You may also pay the full amount at any time, without penalty.

E. Can I Defer Payment?

Yes, if you cannot afford the payments. We will need certain information to make this determination. Contact RVSS for more details--541 779-4144 or 541 664-6300.

IV. My Current System Works Fine. Why Should I Convert to Sewer?

Septic system performance is often limited by soils that may be too thin or contain too much clay. Periodic maintenance is often forgotten. On-site repairs can be expensive and may be only temporary. Ground water levels can rise enough to drown out the drain field. These factors shorten the effective life of a septic system and cause unhealthy conditions.

Failures of on-site systems can contaminate ground water or nearby surface waters without being immediately obvious to the owner. If there are many failures in a given area, a health hazard could develop from people being exposed to contaminated well or surface waters. Conversion to a sewer collection and treatment system eliminates these problems. Even if your system is not failing, you would benefit if a sewer project eliminates irreparable failures nearby.

V. What Other Agencies are Involved?

The State Department of Environmental Quality and Jackson County are responsible for complying with state land-use laws by following the adopted comprehensive plan. They must determine that an area outside an urban growth boundary has a potential health hazard and that on-site solutions are not appropriate in order to comply with the comprehensive plan. Many areas have already qualified in this manner.

If a local improvement district is not appropriate for you, i.e. your need is immediate and there is little chance a local improvement district would be formed in your area in the near future, you have the option of having a public sewer line privately engineered and constructed.

You would have to complete the following:

If the line will need to be constructed down a private road or through private property, easements will need to be written to RVSS and recorded prior to construction. The line

will need to be designed and construction supervised by a professional engineer who will require surveying of the area.

RVSS's engineer will review the plans for a fee.

Development charges will be need to be paid, usually prior to construction. Video taping of the completed main line will be required and any required repairs made prior to expiration of the two-year warranty. As-built information, costs, and GPS points will also be required prior to accepting the line. Connection to the main will be permitted only after the project is accepted.

Other Questions?

Contact RVSS
541-779-4144 or 541-664-6300
138 W Vilas Rd.
Central Point, OR 97502

