

## SPOKANE COUNTY SEWER CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

### HIRING A SIDE SEWER CONTRACTOR

This is intended to provide general guidance for hiring a side sewer contractor to connect your home or business to the Spokane County sewer system. This is not an all inclusive guide. There are items and situations that are not covered by this guide. Spokane County assumes no responsibility for the property owner's connection to the sewer.

- As per the Spokane County Sanitary Sewer Ordinance, construction of side sewers shall only be performed by State of Washington licensed and bonded contractors or by the owner of the property that is to be served by the sewer.
- The installation of a side sewer includes the excavation of a trench of varying depth. Trench excavation and working in a trench can be very dangerous. Spokane County does not recommend that a property owner do their own sewer connection.
- If a property owner wants to perform the installation, he/she must first call (509) 477-3604 to schedule a consultation with an Environmental Services staff person and obtain a sign-off from the Department of Environmental Services. The consultation will occur at the site of the work.
- All installations require a connection permit. Other permits, such as interior plumbing alterations and right-of-way permits may be required. All necessary permits must be obtained **PRIOR** to commencement of any part of the installation. The property owner may obtain the permit(s), but we recommend that the contractor performing the work obtain them. If the property owner is going to obtain the permit(s), you must provide the contractor's name and license number. If you have questions regarding the permit process, please contact an Environmental Services staff person at (509) 477-3604.
- We suggest that you obtain at least three (3) bids. Listed below are some of the basic items that you should discuss with contractors preparing a bid for you. Again, there may be other items or situations not covered by this guide. If the contractor's bid does not include the items below, you should inquire as to what the added cost may be should additional work be necessary.
  - When comparing contractor bids, make sure all bids are for the same services, materials and items.
  - Is the bid for estimated or actual costs? How is additional work authorized and paid for?
  - How will the connection be made? Open trench, bored or a combination of both?
  - Make sure the bid is for connecting "**all necessary building drains**" and that all work is compliant with Spokane County standards.
  - Check to see if the contractor has included "**all necessary permits**" in his bid.
  - Does the bid include abandonment of the septic tank as per Spokane County standards?

- Is the “stub” deep enough to provide gravity service for all necessary connections? If not, does the bid include all related costs for installation and connection via a pump?
- Is the contractor going to be responsible for replacing and/or repairing other improvements that he may damage in the course of work? This may include sprinkler systems, concrete, decks and other possible improvements. How, when, and to what extent will the contractor restore all areas that required excavation or that may have been damaged during the course of the work? *Note: Some contractors may, as a standard procedure, cut, roll and replace the sod, but may charge you additionally for it; some contractors may do this only if you request it and may charge you additionally for it; and, some contractors will not cut, roll or replace the sod even if you request it.*
- Does the contractor require a down payment or deposit? Is it non-refundable?
- Make sure that the bid includes a completion date for the work.
- Make sure all items/services are covered in a written contract, including the warranty period, and that the contract is signed by both you and the contractor.
- Can you break your contract for any reason?
- Can the contractor provide you with references of previous sewer installations?
- All work, whether performed by a licensed contractor or by the property owner, must be in compliance with the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries’ safety requirements.

If you have any questions about hiring a contractor to install your sanitary sewer connection, please feel free to contact an Environmental Services staff person at (509) 477-3604.