

PRIVATE LATERAL PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

The WEF Collection System Committee is primarily interested in successfully operating programs for work performed on the privately-owned portion of the lateral line; e.g., building service connection. We want to assemble policy descriptions, enabling resolutions or ordinances, funding details, public education/information materials, standard design or construction details, etc., for programs that have proven to be successful. This specific program documentation will be made available to other wastewater utilities through a virtual private property program on-line library.

While we are interested in “planned” programs, we want to first concentrate on programs that have been demonstrated to have been effectively implemented. Planned programs will be included in the virtual library after the program has been implemented and actual experience with the program is available.

Program descriptions of private lateral programs that were previously implemented, but considered “failed” or only “partially successful” will be included if the reasons for the problems with the program have been identified and can be included as a “lessons learned” component of the virtual library.

Interview Conducted by WEF Representative: Name: _____
Date: _____

1. General Information

Utility Name & Location: **San Antonio Water System, San Antonio, Texas**

Contact Name & Details: **Jerome A. Iltis, P.E.**
P.O. Box 2449, San Antonio, Texas 78298
(210) 233-3683

Utility Characteristics: **364,493** Number of (Wastewater) Customers
Unknown Number of Taps
4533 Total Miles of Public Sanitary Sewers (separated sewers and combined sewers)
None Miles of Public Combined Sewers (sanitary only, not including storm sewers)
(estimate % of system that is combined if total miles is unavailable or unknown)
No Are basements (thus potentially sump pump connections) typical in your area?
(indicate yes or no)
Municipal government Utility Type

Additional Utility Characteristics:

Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone (EARZ). The Edwards Aquifer is the primary source of water for the greater San Antonio area. The Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, where surface waters seep through a porous geological formation into the aquifer, is a sensitive area due to the risk of contaminating the aquifer. Consequently, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality regulates the wastewater utility infrastructure specifically in the EARZ in accordance with Rule 30, Chapter 213 of the Texas Administrative Code, or 30 TAC 213. The EARZ contains about 495 miles of wastewater pipe.

2. Lateral Definition

SAWS' Private Lateral definition: “Yard Piping - The wastewater piping maintained by the customer, extending from the SAWS wastewater lateral at the customer’s property line to the private wastewater collection system at the customer’s building.” – SAWS Utility Service Regulations.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality’s Private Lateral definition (30 TAC 213):

“Private service lateral - A wastewater line extending from the building drain to an existing private or public sewage collection system or other place of disposal that provides service to one single-family residence or building, with the operation and maintenance as the sole responsibility of the tenant or owner of the building. A wastewater line extending from the convergence of private service laterals from more than one single-family residence or building is considered a sewage collection system.”

(check definition that applies)

(Note if (& how) utility treats laterals in easements differently than laterals in ROWs)

_____ Building To Tap on Sewer Main Line

 X Other (Specify details)

SAWS’ Wastewater Lateral definition: “A pipe maintained by SAWS, extending from a wastewater collection main or manhole to the customer’s property line, which collects wastewater from a customer.” – SAWS Utility Service Regulations.

(Note if (& how) utility treats residential building laterals differently than commercial building laterals – this may affect responses to subsequent questions)

Cleanouts: (check all that apply)	<u>Required</u>	Usually <u>Exists</u>	
	<u> X </u>	<u> X </u>	At building
	_____	_____	At ROW
	_____	_____	At easement

3. (Private) Lateral Program Description

Type of Lateral Program (check all that apply and describe program – try to be brief in program description, but add separate sheets as needed). If utility operates more than one private lateral program, it may be preferable to complete a separate questionnaire form for the remaining questions for each of those private lateral programs.

 X Lateral Maintenance(e.g., cleaning, root control, etc.), Repair (e.g., point repairs, etc.), Replacement:

General: “SAWS will maintain, repair and replace the wastewater laterals from the wastewater main to the property line or wastewater easement line. The customer is responsible for maintenance, repair and replacement of the yard piping extending from the property line or wastewater easement line throughout the remainder of the customer's property.” -- SAWS Utility Service Regulations.

EARZ: By definition of “private service lateral”, TCEQ places the responsibility of operation and maintenance on the tenant or owner of the building in the EARZ. However, its enforcement policy is unknown.

Lateral Reimbursement Program: When a blockage occurs and a sewer backup is experienced by a property owner, there is inherently a question as to where the blockage is located. SAWS encourages customers to call SAWS immediately when they experience a sewer backup. When SAWS receives such a call, a crew will check the main via a manhole in the street to determine if a blockage in the main is causing the backup. If the main is flowing normally, then the problem is assumed to be in the lateral. The property owner will then hire a licensed plumber to inspect his/her lateral and correct the problem. If the blockage is determined by the property owner’s plumber to be

beyond the property line in SAWS' portion of the lateral, then SAWS will correct the problem and reimburse the property owner for the plumber's inspection costs. Attached is a bi-lingual letter that SAWS provides to its customers explaining the inspection and reimbursement process.

Laterals-to-People Program: In those cases when an impoverished homeowner cannot afford to correct a malfunctioning sewer lateral that becomes a health threat, SAWS will correct the problem for the homeowner at SAWS' expense. In 2003, SAWS and the City of San Antonio executed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that establishes the process for the City to determine eligibility for the "Laterals to People" program and to refer the homeowner to SAWS for assistance. Attached is a copy of the MOA.

X I/I Control (Specify type; e.g., cleanout caps, sump pump disconnect, downspout/yard drain disconnect, backflow preventer installation, etc. If basements are typical in area, where are building owners directed to connect the foundation or tile drain lines that have to be disconnected?):

General: No I/I control program currently exists for private sewer laterals. However, a Best Management Practice proposed for inclusion in the Watershed Protection Plan for the impaired Upper San Antonio River is to study the potential impact of leaking private sewer laterals on the river's water quality.

EARZ: In the 5 Year Compliance Plan submitted to TCEQ, smoke testing of SAWS' laterals is proposed, but yet to be implemented. Inherently, by smoke testing SAWS' laterals in the EARZ, the private laterals will also be tested; however, a process for notifying the private owner of lateral defects inside the property line remains to be developed.

X Lateral Reconnects (Specify conditions; e.g., when utility relocates main, etc. Specify special situations; e.g., sewers under building(s) requiring building plumbing changes or extensive lateral relocation):

General: In conjunction with capital improvement projects, SAWS bears the responsibility and cost of reconnecting private laterals when necessitated by the scope of the project. Occasionally, a minor repair to a SAWS lateral near the property line will require SAWS to reconnect the private lateral.

Laterals-to-People Program: SAWS reconnects private laterals under this program.

X Lateral Inspections (Specify conditions; e.g., point of sale, special utility project, etc.):

General: "All wastewater laterals must be installed in strict compliance with SAWS Utility Service Regulations. Prior to connecting to an existing SAWS wastewater main, a wastewater lateral to a platted lot must be permitted by SAWS. SAWS must inspect all wastewater laterals from the wastewater main to the property line after they are installed but before they are backfilled. The City of San Antonio or other appropriate local authority will do inspection from the property line to the structure to ensure compliance with the plumbing code as adopted and amended by the local governing jurisdiction. The permit applicant must provide SAWS 72 hours advance notice when a wastewater lateral is ready for inspection. If the SAWS inspector finds that the wastewater lateral is improperly installed, the plumbing contractor must make the necessary corrections and resubmit the work for inspection. The applicant must pay an additional fee for each re-inspection. Upon satisfactory completion and inspection of a wastewater lateral, SAWS will certify that it was constructed according to these regulations. SAWS will provide a copy of the certification to the applicant." – SAWS Utility Service Regulations.

EARZ: In the 5 Year Compliance Plan submitted to TCEQ, smoke testing of SAWS' laterals is proposed, but yet to be implemented. Inherently, by smoke testing SAWS' laterals in the EARZ, the

existing private laterals will also be tested; however, a process for notifying the private owner of lateral defects inside the property line remains to be developed. Additionally, for inspection of newly installed private laterals, see Amendment #2 to SAWS Utility Service Regulations (attached).

X New Connection Permitting (e.g., special coordination with Building Codes, etc.):

General: “A permit must be obtained from the appropriate local authority for construction of a private lateral. Prior to connecting a wastewater lateral to SAWS' wastewater system, a SAWS authorized contractor under contract to the customer must obtain a connection/adjustment permit from SAWS. The permit applicant must comply with the licensing, bond and insurance requirements set forth in Chapter 24, Article III, Division 2 of the Local Government Code and must pay SAWS a non-refundable application fee. As part of the permit application, the permit applicant must submit a drawing showing the scope of work and the location of the wastewater lateral. Where practical, this drawing must be digitally drawn to scale and geo-referenced.” – SAWS Utility Service Regulations.

EARZ: See Amendment #2 to SAWS Utility Service Regulations (attached).

X New Connection Enforcement Mechanisms:

General: These regulations are enacted pursuant to the laws and regulations of the State of Texas and the City of San Antonio, including the authority granted by the Texas Local Government Code, Title 13, Water and Wastewater Utilities, the Texas Water Code Annotated, Title 2, Water Administration, the City Charter of the City of San Antonio, and Ordinance No. 75686, dated April 30, 1992, and other ordinances adopted by the City Council of San Antonio.

EARZ: See Amendment #2 to SAWS Utility Service Regulations (attached).

4. Lateral Program Implementation

Implementation Date: _____ Why implemented? _____
(e.g., consent order/decreed, reduce CSOs/SSOs, obtain capacity to alleviate sewer moratorium, more cost-effective than “old” program, etc.)

Ongoing Programs? **Yes** Or End Date: _____ Why Ended? _____

What Legal Authority was Required to Implement the Lateral Program? **X** Resolution
(check all that apply, inquire if electronic copy is available
for virtual library; inquire if utility type [i.e., municipality vs.
district] affects the necessary legal authority) **X** Ordinance
X State Enabling Legislation
X Other (Specify) Memorandum of

Agreement

5. Private Lateral Program Funding

Who Pays: _____ Utility _____ Property Owner _____ Other (Specify): _____
(other could include grants, loans, low & moderate income programs, block development grants, etc.; inquire if electronic copy is available for virtual library)

Funding Description:

Except for the Laterals-to-People program, and except where a capital improvement project necessitates the relocation of a private lateral, the property owner pays for operating, maintaining, repairing, and replacing the private lateral.

6. Program Construction

Who Does the Work: _____ Utility Internal Forces _____ Utility Selects & Pays Contractor
_____ Property Owner _____ Property Owner But Only From Utility List
_____ Other (Specify): _____

Construction Description:

For Laterals-to-People projects, and where capital improvement projects necessitate the relocation of a private lateral, SAWS will select and pay the contractor. For all other private lateral work, the property owner is responsible for construction of the private lateral.

Construction Details: Are standard details/specifications used? **Yes** Are electronic copies available? **Yes**

Describe/List Details: _____

7. Public Education/Information Program

How is Lateral Program Publicized? _____ Door hangers Are electronic copies available? _____
_____ Bill stuffers Are electronic copies available? _____
_____ Meetings Are electronic copies available? _____
_____ Brochures Are electronic copies available? _____
_____ Customer Specific Are electronic copies available? _____
(e.g., provide property owner with CCTV still shot of lateral interior, field mark/locate [flag or cone] problem, provide picture of field location in case flag or cone is removed, etc.)
_____ Other (Specify) Are electronic copies available? _____

Additional Description of Material(s): _____

8. Lessons Learned

What Would You Do Differently? _____

What Performance Measures Are/Were Used? _____
(e.g., plant flow reduction, CSO/SSC reduction, basement backup reduction, service call (roots, etc.) reduction, sewer moratorium lifted, etc.) Describe results of Lateral Program on those performance measures:

Lessons Learned: _____

9. Follow-Up Electronic Submittal

Willing to Send Electronic Materials to WEF Collection System Committee for Inclusion in Virtual Library? **Yes**
(list all items utility agrees to send below should future follow-up reminders be needed)

Is utility willing to provide a contact (e.g., either web site address, telephone number or email address [preferably not a name due to possible privacy concerns] for inclusion in the WEF Private Lateral Virtual Library)? **Yes**

WEF Tracking List of Materials: **Utility Service Regulations**

Laterals-to-People MOA

Lateral Reimbursement letter

Standard construction specifications and details
