

## **Appendix B – SOP for Service Calls**

### **SERVICE CALLS**

Wastewater is a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week operation, The purpose of the service call SOP is to respond to any sanitary sewer issue 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. One employee is required to be available to receive any call during nonbusiness hours. A second employee will be called if needed to respond to a service call. Generally there are four types of calls that may require a service response: odor, private line troubles, sewer main obstructions, and SSOs (sanitary sewer overflows). When the call is received the employee should ask questions that will help determine the type of service call and what action needs to be taken. Other types of emergency calls will bill referred to the appropriate utility, while non emergency calls will be handled during business hours.

#### **Receiving Call from Answering Service**

Write down this basic information from the answering service.

- Name
- Number
- Address
- Note time of call

#### **Making the Servie Call**

- Dial the number and ask for the person who called the answering service
- Introduce yourself
- Confirm the information from the answering service
- Find out type of building or location of issue
- Start asking the common questions.

#### **Common Questions to ask caller:**

- Can you describe what is happening?
  - How long has the issue been going on?
  - Does the back up occur only when you are running water or is it continuous?
  - Are any neighbors having back up issues?
  - Is the odor inside or outside the home?
  - Is the water clean or dirty?
  - Is sewage running onto the ground?
  - Is sewage running into a storm inlet or waterway?
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- You need to continue asking questions until you have sufficeint information to determine what type of service call it is and the appropriate response.

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### **ODOR**

An odor call, is usually where a person is smelling sanitary sewer, but cannot see any liquid. Responding to an odor call will be the judgment of the responding on-call employee. Ask several questions: What does the odor smell like? Where is the odor coming from? If the odor is inside the building, have the floor drains been maintained and contain water in the pea trap? Do you live near something that may cause this odor? Are there any signs of sewer overflowing from a clean-out pipe or manhole? Collect as much information regarding what may be the cause of the odor prior to making a decision to respond to the service call. If there is enough information to justify responding to the service call or the caller would prefer someone to investigate the odor concern. When responding to an odor call, follow these instructions.

- Use the collection on call sheet to recruit a 2<sup>nd</sup> person to run the jet.
- Follow the Jet Cleaning SOP to arrive on site
- Once on site , contact the property owner, introduce yourself and investigate the odor.
- Determine if it is confined to inside or outside the property.
- If inside, examine floor and sink drains add water.
- If outside, inspect the upstream and downstream manholes for surcharge and adjacent catch basins.
- Inform property owner of findings.
- Record all required service call information onto crew card, include all observation notes.
- Get back into the truck and turn off safety lights and directional arrows.
- Drive back to the Collection shop.
- Turn in crew card.

### **Private Line Trouble (PLT)**

A PLT is where a building is having a backup that is caused by an obstruction in their service line and not the City main. The disction between a PLT and City sewer main obstruction may be hard to determine on the phone as most property owners do not have a means to investigate the City main to check for proper operation. The differne between a PLT and sewer main obstruction often can not be made until an on site investigation is done. When responding to a PLT, follow these instructions.

- Use the collection on call sheet to recruit a 2<sup>nd</sup> person to run the jet.
- Follow the Jet Cleaning SOP to arrive on site
- Once on site inspect the upstream and downstream manholes for surcharge.
- If no surcharge exists then it is a PLT
- Contact the property owner, introduce yourself, explain your findings that the problem is in their service line. Explain to them that the main will be jetted to verify that there is not an obstruction in the main.
- Continue to follow the Jet Cleaning SOP.

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- After Jetting the line, re-contact property owner and inform them that there was no obstruction (stoppage) in the City main.
- Record all required service call information onto crew card, include all observation notes.
- Get back into the truck and turn off safety lights and directional arrows.
- Drive back to the Collection shop.
- Turn in crew card.

### **Sewer Main Obstruction**

A sewer main obstruction is where a blockage is occurring in the City main and backing sewer up into the system. The obstructions can occur for a variety of reasons or combination of them, roots, grease, poor design, a misplaced utility bore and debris. Often the obstruction is first identified by a property owners calling with sewage in their basement. Bad obstructions may affect more then one property owner. Identifying that you have an obstruction on the phone will be diffucult as most callers do not have a means to investigate the City main to check for proper operation. The differne between a PLT and sewer main obstruction often can not be made until an on site investigation is done. When responding to a sewer main obstruction, follow these instructions.

- Use the collection on call sheet to recruit a 2<sup>nd</sup> person to run the jet.
- Follow the Jet Cleaning SOP to arrive on site
- Once on site inspect the upstream and downstream manholes for surcharge.
- If surcharge exists then there is likely a sewer main obstruction.
- Continue to follow the Jet Cleaning SOP, until the obstruction is cleared.
- Contact affected property owner(s) and inform them that there was an obstruction (stoppage) in the city main and the obstruction has been removed.
- Ask to observe (if possible) any damage that may have occurred to the property and personal belongings.
- Take pictures and record any items of value that were affected by the backup.
- If the owner wishes to file a claim they should be instructed to follow the instructions on the Lincoln Wastewater System Filing of Claims card, which you hand to them.
- Record all required service call information onto crew card and the Lincoln Wastewater System Service/Inspection Summary Sheet form, include all observation comments and damaged personal belongings.
- Get back into the truck and turn off safety lights and directional arrows.
- Drive back to the collection shop
- Turn in crew card.

### **Sanitary Sewer Overflows**

If at any time, while responding to a call and investigating a PLT or sewer main obstruction you witness sewage overflow from a manhole or dwelling onto the ground, street or storm sewer then there is a sanitary sewer overflow in progress. The Environmental Public Health Division, 402-441-8000, should be contacted as well as the Assistant Superintendent, 402-416-8244. If the Assistant Superintendent cannot be reached, then use the Collection calling tree to call other appropriate staff. Continue efforts to break the sanitary sewer obstruction. Remain on site until the Environmental Public Health personnel and Assistant Superintendent arrive on site.

### **Other**

Sometimes a caller will be confused about what utility they are having an issue with. If that can be determined through questioning then give the caller the correct phone number to call. See the Collection calling tree for numbers.