



Phillippi Creek Septic System Replacement Program

Area D central sewer homeowners' guide

For properties served by vacuum collection systems

Central sewer service is coming to nearly 15,500 homes and businesses in the Phillippi Creek drainage basin, an area that stretches from University Parkway south to Clark Road, and from I-75 west to Sarasota Bay.

Your property is located in Area D. This project will make central sewer available to approximately 1480 homes.

This document contains information about the project. You may find it helpful as work proceeds. You will be notified by mail when the central sewer lines are operational.

One of Sarasota County's goals during the project is to keep property owners updated about what is happening, what to expect and whom they can contact when questions or issues arise. You can get more detailed information in the following ways:

- Online at scgov.net; click on County A - Z, select "S"; click on Sarasota County Sewers (Phillippi Creek Septic System Replacement program). Details are in the left-hand column. Click on Area D of the map.
- Come to one of the scheduled open houses.
- Read the Neighborhood Updates that will periodically be mailed to property owners.
- Email questions to SarasotaSewers@scgov.net.
- Contact customer service at 941-861-6790.

Open House

Any time between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Southgate Community Center
3145 Southgate Circle

April 3 focusing on properties **south** of Webber

May 22 focusing on properties **north** of Webber

No formal presentation

- See where your connection will be
- Ask questions
- Review the construction schedule
- Receive financial information



Frequently Asked Questions for Vacuum Sewer Installations

How can I tell if I am in one of the areas to receive central sewers?

The county will notify property owners that will be getting central sewer service. If you would like to confirm that your property is included, please call Customer Service at 941-861-6790 and provide your address. You may also contact us by email at SarasotaSewers@scgov.net.

When will service be available to us?

It is expected that you will be able to hook up for service by the fall of 2009.

How will I know that service is available?

Once the pump station is operational Utilities Customer Service will send certified letters to customers where connection points have been provided, notifying them that sewer service is available. The customer's signing of receipt of the letter starts the clock for both the 90-day rebate for early connection and the 1-year requirement to connect to the system. Property owners can request an extension in writing not to exceed 45 days. Notices are sent by certified return receipt to the owner's address on file with the Sarasota County Property Appraiser's Office.

What if I am away when a notice is sent?

Notices are sent to the property owner's address on file with the Sarasota County Property Appraiser's Office (same address used for tax bills). If the notice is not received, a new notice will be sent first class and the notice recorded on public records.

Why do we have to hook up within a year?

Florida Statute No. 381.00655 and Sarasota County Ordinance No. 2006-093 require that you connect to an available central sewer system within 365 days of written notice that service is available to your property. There are no exceptions to this requirement. Connection is mandatory for anyone receiving official notification that service is available to the property. Failure to comply as required in the ordinance will result in code enforcement procedures against the property owner.

Can we leave the septic tank in place for emergencies?

No. A major goal of the program is to eliminate hazards caused by leaking septic tanks. All tanks must be crushed and filled following connection to the central sewer system per Florida Department of Health requirements.

Will there be an incentive of \$1000 for early hook up? What if we can't get a plumber out before the 90 days expires?

Property owners who connect within 90 days of notification are eligible for up to a \$1000 incentive

rebate. Property owners can request an extension in writing not to exceed 45 days for circumstances beyond their control.

Is there a list of qualified plumbers?

Any licensed plumber is qualified. There is a list of plumbers who do this type of work online at scgov.net or email your questions to SarasotaSewers@scgov.net. You can also call Customer Service at 941-861-6790 and ask for a copy of the list. You may also be contacted by plumbers wishing to do the work.

How can economies of scale be realized by getting a group rate on plumbing work?

Homeowner groups may choose to work together to contract with the same plumbing company to do the work. Customers are encouraged to seek bids from reputable contractors, and select the one that is best for them.

Do I have to have a licensed plumber?

Can I do the work myself as long as I do it to code?

A homeowner who actually lives in the home can do the work, provided they obtain the appropriate plumbing permit and perform the work to code. A tenant in a rental property cannot do the work, nor can a property owner who does not live in the home. Permits can be obtained at the Building Department, 1301 Cattlemen Road, Sarasota, Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:30 p.m. Contact the Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for information about permitting. For more details about doing it yourself log onto scgov.net, click on "Utilities" then "Sarasota Sewers" and click on *Construction Process* in the left-hand column. The decommissioning of the septic tank must be done by a licensed plumber or septic tank company.

What if I recently installed a new septic system per county regulations and now I need to hook up to central sewer?

The county will credit your utility account if you had septic system repairs or installed a new system that were permitted by the Health Department within the last 10 years. You will be required to provide the county with proof of payment for the work or installation and permits. The maximum credit is prorated based on when the repair or replacement cost was incurred and cannot exceed \$1,560.*

If approved, this credit would first be subject to any monies due Sarasota County Environmental Services. Please contact Utilities Customer Service at 941-861-6790 for details or to answer your questions.

**In no event shall the credit exceed the costs of the 2 repair or replacement.*

What if we have two septic tanks?
 The owner will be responsible at the property line for the connection of the two septic tank lines into one.

How can the property owner prepare?

1. Plan now to remove unpermitted obstructions (shrubbery, basketball assemblies, etc.) from the public right-of-way or dedicated utility easement. The county cannot guarantee they will be replaced.
2. During construction, keep children and pets away from work areas and equipment.

On which side of the street will you construct the sewer lines?

The county has hired an engineering firm to design each phase of the program. The engineering firm will determine where sewer collection lines will be placed and where connection points will be located. In general, sewer lines will be installed along the side of the road. During construction, every effort will be made to minimize or repair disruption to driveways and landscaping. The cost to connect does not vary based on the side of the street.

If roads, driveways, sidewalks or mailboxes are affected by construction, will the county fix the damage?

Yes. The county requires that the area be restored to its original condition, or better. Some landscaping

may not be saved or replaced if it is located in the right-of-way.

Homeowners with site-specific concerns will be able to discuss them with the engineer during the design and construction phase.

Headwalls at driveway culverts are no longer acceptable under Sarasota County code. If they are damaged during construction, they will not be replaced but the area will be restored to current county standards.

How long will my street be disrupted by construction?

That depends on many factors, including weather, the number of connections on the street and the sewer technology installed. Generally, a street may be disrupted for construction from three to four weeks; however, certain conditions may require more time. Every effort will be made to limit street closures.

For homes using wells for drinking water, will central water be provided at the same time the sewer system is installed?

In most cases, central water will be made available, but the connection is not currently mandatory. For information on costs, call Utilities Customer Service at 941-861-6790 and ask for information about water hookups.

Estimated costs to owner for on-lot work Information subject to change

	Item	Estimated cost
1.	Abandon septic tank	\$650
2.	Install sewer service (house 50' from right-of-way line)	
	25' to front of house	\$375 *
	50' front of house to right-of-way	\$750 *
	Estimated sub-total	\$1,775
	Variables	
1.	Landscaping restoration*	lot dependent
2.	Additional gravity pipeline (beyond 50' assumed above)	\$15/linear foot
3.	Permitting	Owner's responsibility
*	<i>County assumes no liability for landscape restoration.</i>	

Customer Costs

Assistance for customers with limited income

For owner-occupied properties with income-eligible homeowners, fees (capacity fee, on-lot expense and required permit fees) may be paid through a no-interest, deferred payment loan offered by the Sarasota Office of Housing and Community Development. Assistance is limited and applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact 941-951-3640 for program details.

Single-family homes are required to connect to a central sewer system when the service becomes available in their neighborhood. The fees are as follows:

Sewer Capacity Fee \$2031 per single family home. Can be financed upon request

This fee is paid for any county connection including new construction, regardless of location. This fee covers the cost of the county's major sewer plants, collection line and pump stations. This fee can be financed in full or part upon request for up to 20 years at 3% interest. The loan can be paid off at any time. A separate loan bill is issued monthly to the property owner. This loan must be paid off should the property be sold. Low income financing may be available through the Office of Housing and Community Development. The monthly loan payment, if the entire amount is financed for 20 years, is about \$11 per month.

Sewer Deferred Standby Fee Estimated \$596.16 on December 2009. Can finance with capacity fee.

This fee is the interest paid on loans acquired by the county to fund the sewer system. This fee is paid for any county connection to the system including new construction regardless of location.

Annual Assessment \$165 per single family home

This is a portion of the costs of the design and construction of the sewer lines in your neighborhood. The remainder of the cost is included in the rate surcharge shown below. By county ordinance this will be billed on a 20 to 25 year property tax assessment whether the property is connected to sewer or not. Costs can be reduced by financial incentives such as grants that reduce the final cost of construction. The fee is automatically billed on the annual property tax bill. Should you wish to pay in full, the current amount is \$2,345 however, no refunds will be given if the final fee is reduced later. This assessment stays with the property should it be sold and does not have to be paid in full any time during the term. The term will be determined by the county commission at a public hearing but is generally done on a 20 to 25 year assessment.

Deposit \$75 per single family home

A refundable deposit is required for all new customers. It may be waived with good credit. If paid, this deposit is credited back to the utility account with interest after 12 months of good payment history.

On-site Cost Varies by property

The cost of plumbing, abandoning the septic system or other on-site work needed by the property owner to connect to sewer. This cost would include any plumbing permits or inspections. A plumbing permit is required for any plumbing work performed either by the property owner or plumbing company.

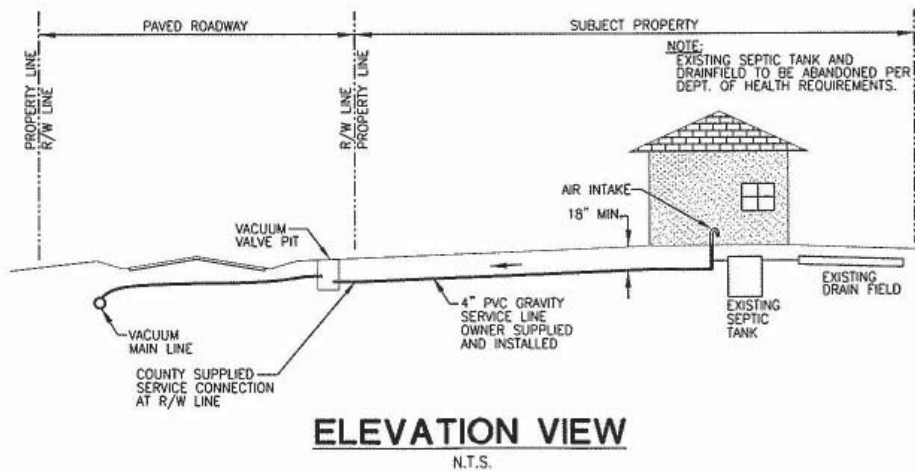
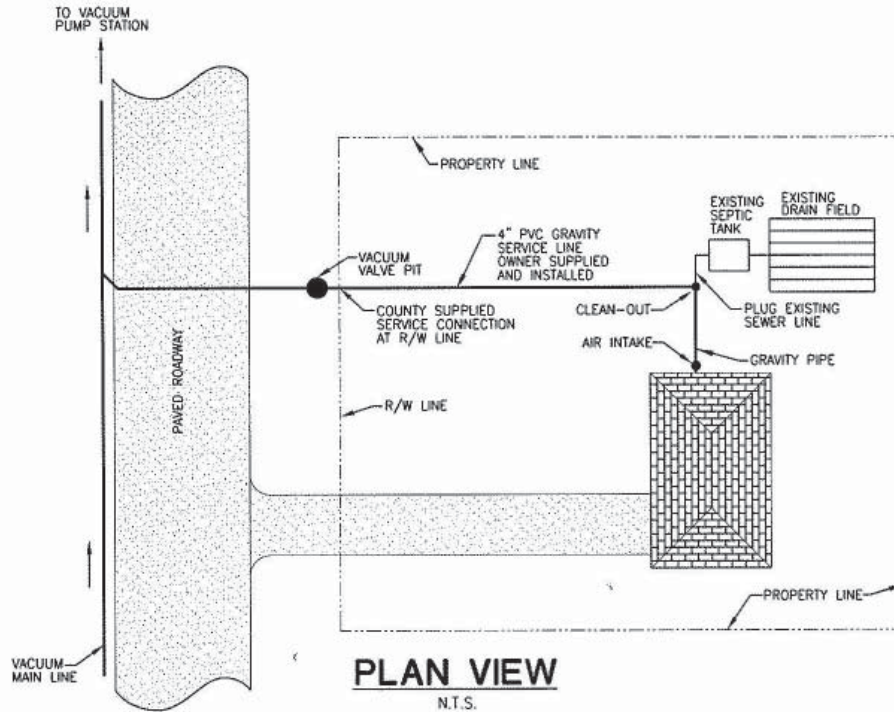
Utility Bill \$13.75 base charge per month per single family home, plus usage

Monthly utility bill to cover the service provided. Note: a base charge billing will begin one year after notification even if the property/building is not connected at that time. Vacant properties will not be charged. Usage charges start at \$6.92 per 1,000 gallons with a cap at 10,000 gallons. A single family home with two people generally receive a sewer bill of \$33 to \$55 per month not including water charges.

Rate Surcharge \$19 per month single family home

Monthly sewer surcharge to cover the cost of construction of sewer lines in your neighborhood. This is the portion of the costs of construction that is not covered by the annual assessment shown above. This fee is unique to the Phillippi Creek Septic System Replacement Program. The costs may be reduced by financial incentives such as grants or other options that reduce the final cost. This fee will automatically be billed on the monthly sewer bill and begins one year after notification that sewer is available even if the property is not connected. Should you wish to pay this fee in full, the current payoff amount is \$5,534 however no refunds will be allowed should the fee be reduced at a later date. The term this fee will be billed has not yet been determined as the final construction cost is not known but is anticipated to be 20 - 25 years.

PHILLIPPI CREEK SEPTIC SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROGRAM TYPICAL VACUUM SEWER CONNECTION



What to expect during vacuum sewer construction

Before work crews arrive to install sewer collection systems in your neighborhood, Sarasota County hopes you will take time to learn about the construction process and how you can help reduce “frustration factors” that come with any disruption to neighborhood services.

Below is a summary of the construction process. The contractor will give as much notice as possible before beginning work on your street.

Stage 1 - Survey staking and pre-construction video

This stage includes physical staking of the proposed utility system using stakes or other markers. After staking, the site will be videotaped to record pre-construction conditions. Residents are urged not to disturb the survey stakes/markers.

Stage 2 - Right-of-way trimming and clearing

This stage could take a few days per street and may involve cutting and removing driveway sections, drainage structures and other obstructions located in public rights-of-way or dedicated utility easements.

Stage 3 - Directional drilling

In selected cases, rather than using an open trench for pipes, work crews will use small drilling machines to install portions of the pipe network without significantly disturbing the area. This technique is used to protect heritage trees and deal with other restrictions like narrow rights-of-way and decorative driveways. Each drilling operation is usually finished within a few hours. Small piles of dirt and drilling medium at each end of the installed pipe could remain for a longer period.

Stage 4 - Mainline piping

Residents should expect inconveniences during construction of the sewer collection lines. Work crews will cross driveways, walkways and may excavate entire streets. Streets will remain open, but partial lane closures may be necessary. Residents will notice the contractor digging trenches of various depths as other crews follow, assembling and installing lengths of pipe. The length of pipe installed in one workday varies from 300 to 1,500 feet depending on ground conditions. A resident's driveway may be inaccessible for a short time. By the end of each day, the contractor will temporarily restore driveways and replace mailboxes and backfill trenches and/or otherwise erect approved safety barricades and fencing. Because of high water table conditions, groundwater “dewatering” is often necessary. This involves setting temporary well points and pumping groundwater with portable pumps and

hoses to approved points of discharge, usually into existing stormwater drainage systems. Sometimes the dewatering equipment operates during the evening and it is important that only authorized personnel operate and adjust this equipment.

Stage 5 - Collection system component installation

The contractor will install vacuum valve pits in the right-of-way and extend gravity service lateral lines from the pits to each resident's property line. The valve pits are fiberglass tanks that range in height from six to ten feet. They are buried flush with the ground in the public right-of-way or dedicated easement.

Stage 6 - Restoration

The contractor will rely on the construction plans and the pre-construction videotape when restoring construction areas to original conditions. Restoration activities that will begin once the pipe installation is complete may take several weeks or longer, depending on construction. Headwalls at driveway culverts will not be replaced since they no longer meet county code. Residents with concerns about the quality of restoration work should call Utilities Customer Service at 941-861-6790. The county will resurface affected county-maintained roads in the project area after all other restoration is complete.

Stage 7 - Notice of service availability

Once the system is certified for use, the county will notify residents when it is time to abandon septic systems and connect to the sewer system. You will receive a complete package of information by certified mail. It will provide detailed information about how to connect once the sewer system is operational in your area.

Contact us

Where can I get more information?

Call Customer Service at 941-861-6790 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday or 9 a.m. to 4:30 pm Friday. Or e-mail us at SarasotaSewers@scgov.net. Information is also posted on the Web at scgov.net, County A-Z, click on “S” and “Sarasota County Sewers (Phillippi Creek Septic System Replacement Program).”