

Citizens Guide to Sewer Connection

Chico Urban Area Nitrate Compliance Program



Benefits of Public Sewer

- ✓ Provides a means for property owners to comply with Prohibition Order.
- ✓ Reduces septic system maintenance issues and costs.
- ✓ Increases the re-sale value of the home.
- ✓ Eliminates future environmental concerns over long-term use of septic-tanks.
- ✓ Construction costs are potentially lower now due to downturn of the economy.

Steps to Connection

Step 1 - Sewer Service Application

For information on the application and fees, contact the City of Chico at 530-879-6950.

Step 2 - Building Permit

A plumbing permit is required to ensure all work meets local building and plumbing standards. Contact either the City of Chico Building Division at 530-879-6700 or Butte County Building Department at 530-538-7601.

Step 3 - Hire a Contractor

If you choose not to hire a contractor, ensure that the person performing the work will be able to meet the necessary requirements.

Step 4 - Locate Lateral

Locate the public sewer lateral at the property line.

Step 5 - Trench

Trench from the public sewer lateral to the location where the system will connect to your home.

Step 6 - Installation

Install the sewer line from the public sewer lateral to the connection on the home.

Step 7 - Inspection

Make an appointment with a Building Department Inspector. Call the City of Chico Building Division at 530-879-6700 or Butte County Building Department at 530-538-7601.

Step 8 - Fill Trench

Once work is inspected and approved, fill trench with suitable materials, in most cases existing dirt will be acceptable.

Step 9 - Destroy Septic Tank

Contact Butte County Environmental Health at 530-538-7281 regarding the required permit and inspection. Destruction involves having a licensed septic tank pumper pump the tank properly dispose of its contents; puncturing the tank and filling with clean soil, slurry or pea gravel; and after satisfactory destruction inspection, backfilling the excavations and cleaning up the site.

Step 10 - Final Approval

Upon verification of satisfactory tank destruction, Environmental Health notifies the City of Chico or County Building Division. The Building Division then issues the final sewer connection approval.

Why Sewers Now?

In the late 1970s the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) evaluated nitrate contamination in private wells in the Chico Urban Area. DWR found several areas of high nitrate levels and concluded that septic tanks were a major source of nitrate contamination.

To protect groundwater quality, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted Prohibition Order No. 90-126 on April 27, 1990, prohibiting waste discharges from septic systems within the Chico Urban Area. This Order initially affected nearly 12,000 dwelling units, targeting them for connection to the City's sewer collection system. These areas are located within the Chico Urban Area's northern area (Lassen Avenue corridor), central area (Chico-Vecino Avenues), and southern area (Chapman-Mulberry Neighborhood).

Diversion of these discharges to the City's existing sewer system for treatment will reduce approximately 90 tons per year of nitrates that potentially contaminate groundwater quality in the aquifer serving the Chico Urban Area. The County of Butte, City of Chico, and Chico Redevelopment Agency have worked together to find a means to provide public sewer facilities to which citizens could connect in order to comply with the Prohibition Order.

Questions

Design, engineering, or construction

City of Chico Building and Development Services
Department, 530.879.6950

Building permit and inspections

City limits of Chico
City of Chico Building Division
530.879.6700

Unincorporated area of the County
Butte County Building
Department 530.538.7601

Financing of connection fees

City of Chico Building and Development Services
Department, 530.879.6950

Funding assistance for low/moderate income households for sewer costs

City limits of Chico
City of Chico Housing and Neighborhood Services
Department
530.879.6301

Unincorporated area of the County
Regional Housing Authority
888.671.0220, ext. 127.

Handling of septic tanks after connection

Butte County Environmental Health 530.538.7281

General questions

Butte County Administration
Casey Hatcher, 530.538.6182

City of Chico Engineering Division
Matt Thompson, 530.879.6959

Do I Hire a Contractor?



If you choose to hire a professional contractor, please search the Yellow Pages or the internet under the headings "Contractors,

General Engineering, Plumbing or Septic." Seek estimates from several sources and also ask friends for references.

A licensed General Contractor has these minimum qualifications:

- Experience in permitting and construction.
- The required equipment to perform the job.
- Bonding and Insurance.

Verify a contractor's license via the internet at www.cslb.ca.gov or by telephone at 800.321.2752.

Sewer Connection Costs

The estimated cost for a private contractor to install a private sewer lateral from your home to the sewer main can range from \$4,000 to \$6,000. This cost range includes the following: permits from County Health and Building Departments, sewer lateral installation and connection, trenching and backfilling of the trench, coordinating with inspectors, septic tank pumping and decommissioning, and general site maintenance and clean up. Additional costs may be incurred if landscaping needs to be re-worked or if the contractor needs to remove fencing or structures to access the property.

