



Wastewater Lateral Line Connections - What Every Property Owner Should Know

The FCAA Engineering Department will be the initiators and facilitators for the service connection program for each of the central wastewater collection system projects under FCAA jurisdiction.

Central sewer service will become available only after the associated wastewater plant is operational and the newly constructed collection system is connected to the plant.

Once service is available the FCAA will issue a 30 Day Notice of Availability. Only after this notification is issued are property owners allowed to make the connection provided at the property line.

Connecting as many customers to the system as possible in the first months of operation facilitates an efficient wastewater system startup. This is the reason for the 30-day connection requirement. Each customer is urged to plan their connection well in advance to avoid delays.

The minimum tasks with which each customer will be confronted follow:

- ✓ **Plan Route:** Evaluate the most economical and practical route from the “building drain” (the sewer pipe leaving the building) to the connection point provided at the property line. Minimizing obstructions to equipment access and impacts to hardscaped and landscaped areas will reduce costs.
- ✓ **Plumbing Quotes:** Contact local plumbers to get a competitive price to do the work. In some instances neighbors have benefited by collectively soliciting plumbers for quotes. Plumbers may be able to minimize expenses if they are able to set up in one neighborhood and complete multiple connections. Discuss routing possibilities with the plumbers. When getting a price, clarify in writing if the quote includes septic tank abandonment, permitting and any landscaping, concrete, or asphalt restoration necessary. Many homeowners plan on completing the rough trenching and restoration themselves. If you are going complete the plumbing yourself, even if you are well experienced, you should obtain a copy of the **FCAA’s Lateral Line Construction Packet** to ensure that you meet any special requirements. Verify that any plumber offering a quotation has seen the guidelines and is including all requirements. Confirm that the plumber commits to completing the work by the date required.
- ✓ **Abandonment/Conversion Quotes:** If the plumber has not specifically included “on-site sewage system abandonment” in the quote it will be necessary to have a licensed septage hauler pumpout the septic tank. Additionally a hole will be required to be punched in the bottom of the tank and the tank will be required to be filled with sand or suitable soil. These last two steps may be completed by an owner-builder.

Recently the Department of Health has begun to issue variances to homeowners who wish to convert their septic systems into cisterns. Contact the Department of Health at (305) 293-7524 for more information on their specific requirements. Care must be taken to prevent cross contamination of the customer’s water supply during the conversion of the septic tank. Please note that a T-10 Double Check Backflow water meter is required on all customer connections converting their septic tank to a cistern. If the customer’s existing water meter is not a T-10 Double Check Backflow meter the FCAA will provide and install the meter for existing customers at no charge.



Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority Big Coppitt Wastewater District



- ✓ **Select Contractor(s):** Ensure that there is no misunderstanding of what is included in the quote.
- ✓ **Obtain Building/Abandonment Permit:** If not included in your plumbing quote, you will need to obtain two permits. A wastewater lateral permit will be required from Monroe County and a septic tank abandonment permit will be required from the DOH. If doing the work yourself prepare a drawing of the proposed piping layout and submit with your County permit application. Please refer to the [FKAA's Lateral Line Construction Packet](#) for additional permitting information.
- ✓ **File Notice of Commencement:** This form must be filed with Clerk of Courts per Florida Statute on any work valued at over \$2,500. Filing fee is \$10.00 if the one page form is used.
- ✓ **Begin Construction:** Commence work up to point of inspection.
- ✓ **Acquire Inspection:** If your contractor is looking after the permitting, he will schedule the required inspections, otherwise you will need to call for inspections required by the Building Inspector. An FKAA representative will inspect your lateral prior to allowing you to connect to the system. FKAA may refuse service if your lateral installation does not meet the minimum standards. Please refer to the [FKAA's Lateral Line Construction Packet](#) for additional information.
- ✓ **Complete Construction:** Once all inspections have passed, tie in to the connection point and abandon septic tank.
- ✓ **Billing Commencement:** Per Monroe County Code property owner connection is required 30 days after the Notice of Service Availability is mailed to the property owner. Billing for sewer service will **not** begin until at least 30 days after mailing of the Notification of Service Availability. Billing for sewer service **will** begin when the customer is legally obliged to connect, even if a delay has been encountered and the connection not yet completed.
- ✓ **Once Connected:** Back-ups in the system are unlikely, but a clean-out has been provided at the street to handle such situations. If the resident calls because of a wastewater backup, our service person will need to open the cleanout at the street and check for a blockage. If the cleanout riser is dry, then the blockage is in the customer's line and is the customer's responsibility. FKAA would be the customer's first call as the FKAA will not charge the customer for the trouble call. Please call (305) 296-2454 if there is a back-up in the system.

Summary

Each customer to be served by the new wastewater collection system has the option of arranging all of the above items well in advance. Some of the work may be completed in advance, including partial installation of a dry-line pipe. Final connection may be completed as soon as the Notices to Connect are issued, and billing will not occur until the pre-scheduled date following official notification, so there is no financial benefit in delaying the connection tasks. Early action to avoid the rush and the possibly higher prices of very busy contractors is advised.