

# FAQs: Gravity Sewer



Charlotte County Utilities Department | Connecting to Sewer Service

January 2024

## Q. What type of sewer service will be provided?

A. The Charlotte County Utilities Department will be installing a Gravity Sewer Systems in your area. This is the traditional sewer system which consists of pipes from buildings to one or more levels of larger underground trunk mains, and above-ground lift stations, which transport the sewage to wastewater treatment facilities. Vertical pipes, usually made of precast concrete, called manholes, connect the mains to the surface.

## Q. Who will maintain my sewer and larger sewer infrastructure?

A. The sewer system from your street to the wastewater plant is maintained by the Utilities Department, including parts and labor costs. However, the house plumbing problems are the responsibility of the customer.

## Q. What costs are associated with connecting to the sewer line?

A. The fees associated with connecting to the sewer system are defined in Rate Resolution 2016-017, totaling \$6,401 for the average home. Utility connection fees are subject to change based on the approved rate resolution at the time you enter into an agreement to activate service. Please call Engineering Services at 941.764.4300, Option #3 to confirm the costs for your property.

## Q. Are financing options available for mandatory connections?

A. Yes. We have loan payment options to help you pay these costs over a longer time period. Once the costs have been finalized through Engineering Services, please call 941.764.4300, Option #2 (Customer Service) to work out the payment details.

## Q. What other initial costs are involved?

A. Once you have paid the utility connection fees, it is your responsibility to hire a plumber to complete the connection to your home and abandon the onsite septic system. Once the plumber has completed the connection, you or your plumber must contact the Utilities Department at 941.764.4300, Option #3 to let us know the connection has been made. You must also provide a septic tank abandonment permit # to Utilities.

## Q. What monthly costs will be charged to me for sewer service?

A. The \$43.27 base facility charge and a \$4.59 customer service charge are set and driven by our rate resolution, and are billed monthly whether the services are used or not. The \$4.59 customer service charge only applies if you are not already a water customer. The base facility charge covers fixed, non-variable fees such as debt service, depreciation and insurance associated with the line and wastewater facilities. In addition, the usage charge per 1,000 gallons is \$6.03. This totals approximately \$71.98 monthly for the average customer using 4,000 gallons of water. These monthly rates are subject to change based on the approved rate resolution at the time of service.

## Q. If my septic system is relatively new and/or working fine do I have to connect to the sewer system?

A. Yes. If sewer is considered available as defined by Charlotte County Code Sec. 3-8-41 and Florida Statute Section 381.00655, you will be legally required to pay utility connection fees and connect to the system. For residential, a mandatory connection means a you have an estimated sewage flow of one thousand (1,000) gallons per day or less and a sewer collection line exists in an easement or right-of-way that abuts the property line. For non-residential, a mandatory connection means you have more than an estimated sewage flow of one thousand (1,000) gallons per day and a sewer collection line exists in an easement or right-of-way that abuts the property line.

**Q. How will I know if it is mandatory that I connect to the sewer line?**

- A. If your property is considered a mandatory connection, you will receive a certified letter once the line has been installed and certified for use. From that point you will have 365 days to pay the connection fees and complete the connection to the home.

**Q. What if my property is a mandatory connection and I do not pay to connect to the sewer line?**

- A. You will be in violation of Charlotte County Code Chapter 3-8-41 and Florida Statute Section 381.00655 if you do not connect to the County's sewer collection system within 365 days of receiving the certified letter. If you do not pay the connection fees to the Utilities Department, a lien will be placed on your property and filed in the Official Records with the Clerk of Court. After the initial 365 day period, the monthly sewer base facility charge will also begin to accrue and will appear on your bill in the next billing period. Failure to pay such charges and connecting to the system will result in initiation of Charlotte County Utilities' delinquency process, including the Code Enforcement process, which may include penalties, fines, fees and discontinuation of existing utility services.

**Q. There is no structure built on the property yet. Do I need to pay utility connection fees or monthly base charges for an undeveloped lot?**

- A. No, you do not need to pay the mandatory utility connection fees or monthly base charges until a residence or commercial structure is built on the property. Once you begin the construction process, please contact our Engineering Department at 941.764.4300, Option #3 to be informed of the cost of connecting.

**Q. What if my septic system is currently failing and needs to be replaced?**

- A. Please call us at 941.764.4300, Option #3 and let us know if you are experiencing major issues with your septic system, or have received recent notices from the Department of Health or its contractor.

**Q. Does converting from septic to sewer provide environmental benefits?**

- A. Yes. Environmental studies have shown that excess nutrients and bacteria from septic systems in dense, coastal areas are having a negative impact on Charlotte Harbor. Charlotte County is committed to being good stewards of the environment by proactively converting to sewers and maintaining infrastructure in the decades ahead.

**Q. Will I be provided notice prior to the start of construction on my street?**

- A. Yes. Utilities staff or a contractor will give notice to the property owner a few days before construction activity takes place.

**Q. What can I expect when Utilities staff or contractors are working in my neighborhood?**

- A. You can expect some inconvenience due to equipment movement, material transport and trench excavation. The systems should only impact the street at intersection crossings or service lateral crossings. Access to your property will be impacted during construction in front of your home, but your lawn, driveway and roads will be restored upon completion of the project.

**Contact Us For More Info:**

941.764.4300, Option #3  
(Initial Costs & Engineering Services)

[Administrative.Assistants@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:Administrative.Assistants@CharlotteCountyFL.gov)

941.764.4300, Option #2  
(Payment Plans & Customer Service)

[CCUSupport@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:CCUSupport@CharlotteCountyFL.gov)