

## **Sanitary Sewer Tap In Questions and Answers**

**Question: My Septic tank (aerator) is working fine, why should I have to connect to a sanitary sewer?**

*Answer: Even a properly maintained private sewage treatment system does not treat sewage wastes as thoroughly as does a centralized sewer plant. It is also an unfortunate fact that a few property owners will not properly maintain their sewage systems or may even attempt to use a sewage system to dispose of dangerous materials. Thus concentrations of homes served by private sewage systems are always associated with soil and water pollution. Additionally, the Federal Clean Waters Act of the United States and the State of Ohio requires properties that have accessible centralized water treatment to connect once available.*

**Question: My home has a working septic tank and a leach field. If a sanitary sewer is built that will pass by my home, will I have to tap?**

*Answer: Whether you will have to tap depends upon how far the sanitary sewer is to your home and other factors. The Columbus Health Department will make assessment as to how accessible your home is to the sewer.*

**Question: How does the Health Department determine whether my home is accessible?**

*Answer: The determination is made based upon whether the sewer is legally available, the distance between the tap location and your home, and whether there are any intervening obstacles.*

**Question: What determines whether a sanitary sewer is legally available?**

*Answer: The builder/owner of the sanitary sewer must notify the Columbus Health Department that the sewer is available to tap to. Normally the owner will be the City of Columbus, but other agencies and even private individuals may build sanitary sewers. Also the tap location must be on or at least next to your property.*

**Question: What about the distance between my house and the sewer?**

*Answer: Section 6117 of the Ohio Revised Code specifies that a home that is less than 200 feet from the right away in which a sanitary sewer is located must connect to the sewer. A home that is more than 200 feet from a sanitary sewer right of way can be ordered to connect, if a registered professional engineer designated by the Health Department determines and certifies that the sewer is available and accessible. Distance is measured from the closest foundation wall to the sanitary sewer line/wye.*

**Question: How much time do I have to tap to the sewer?**

*Answer: 90 days is the normal time period. An extension of up to nine months will be granted upon request. (The nine months begins when the line was originally made available to the property owner to connect).*

**Question: What does a property owner need to do to get an extension?**

*Answer: The owner needs to make a request in writing to the Columbus Health Department and must agree in the request to tap to the sewer before the extension expires.*

**If you have additional questions and concerns regarding sanitary sewer availability within the City of Columbus, please contact the Septic Tank Elimination Program (STEP) Coordinator at 614-645-6754 or [SewageReports@columbus.gov](mailto:SewageReports@columbus.gov)**