



## **CITY OF BEMIDJI SEWER MAINTENANCE POLICY**

### **I. Introduction**

The City has 81 miles of sanitary sewer lines; 1,121 manholes; and 31 lift stations within its sanitary sewer system. The City of Bemidji recognizes that it is in the City's best interest to develop a policy for routine maintenance, required extraordinary maintenance, and appropriate response to sewer backups and other conditions which may cause either flooding or damage to private property or the City's sanitary sewer system. The City will use City employees, equipment and/or private contractors to provide this service.

When the Public Works Director, and/or Sewer and Water Chief Operators determine that policy levels of service cannot be provided using existing City resources within the present budget, he or she shall report to the City Engineer the following information:

1. Additional time required to provide desired level of service using existing City employees, equipment, and resources.
2. Additional equipment and/or employee or contractor resources required to achieve desired level of service.
3. Estimated number of hours equipment and costs incurred to achieve desired level of service.

The Public Works Director or City Engineer will then:

- a) Determine the availability of additional resources
- b) Estimate the cost of obtaining contracted services
- c) Determine the availability of funds to meet the required costs
- d) Determine whether the delay in providing the desired level of service is likely to affect the quality of service or increase the likelihood of backups or other problems

Based on the information provided by the Public Works Director or City Engineer, the City Council or City Manager will determine whether and when additional resources or funds should be allocated to achieve the desired level of service.

### **II. Routine Sewer Line Maintenance**

The City of Bemidji intends to use the following equipment and resources for routine sewer cleaning and maintenance. The Sewerline Department uses the following equipment for routine sewer cleaning and maintenance:

1. Flusher Truck – Flushing dead end lines
2. Serco Rodding Machine

3. Trailer Mounted Jet Unit
4. Vacuum Trailer

Sewerlines larger than 12" are contracted out.

Contractors equipment shall be Jet-Vac units with root cutters and/or bucket machines.

All televising of sanitary sewers will be contracted out. All lines shall be televised every 15 years.

The sanitary sewer lines identified on the sanitary sewer map as "priority A" will receive ordinary routine maintenance. The sanitary sewer lines identified on the sanitary sewer map as "priority B" will receive either less frequent or more frequent maintenance depending on the line or facility in question. "Priority B" lines and facilities will be identified on the sanitary sewer map and receive maintenance according to the following.

It is the City's policy to perform routine maintenance on "priority A" lines (VCP) once a year. Routine maintenance shall consist of rodding sanitary sewer lines using the City's rodding machine during the months of April to November.

It is the City's policy to perform routine maintenance on "priority B" lines (PVC or Armco Truss) once every three years. Routine maintenance shall consist of jetting sanitary sewer lines using the City's jet & vac machine during the months of May to October.

The Public Works Director shall determine whether a line or facility is "priority A", receiving routine sewer cleaning and maintenance or "priority B", receiving maintenance according to the "priority B" maintenance schedule.

### III. Emergency Response

It is the City of Bemidji's policy to respond to sewer backups, lift station problems or failures, or other real or potential system problems or failures 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. During normal business hours, all calls and reported problems will be routed to and dispatch crews dispatched by the City Sewer Department. Normal business hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. At all times other than normal business hours, emergency call will be routed to the Fire Department at 751-8001. The Public Works Director shall designate one or more employees as "on call" during non-business hours and will develop an on-call schedule and "on call" response procedures.

It is the goal of the department to provide an initial response within 90 minutes, or as soon as possible under the circumstances, of receiving a problem or emergency call. The time necessary to remedy a problem will vary depending on the number of call, the nature and seriousness of the problem, weather and other

factors that may affect the department's ability to respond, find and correct a reported problem. Ordinarily, it is expected that a blockage in a City sanitary sewer line will be removed and flow restored within two (2) hours of first receiving the call. Problems that require excavation or other extraordinary measures or equipment to remedy may take more time.

City employees will exercise their discretion and take appropriate steps to minimize damage to both the City sanitary sewer system and to private property.

City employees must notify both the Public Works Director and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency before bypassing the City sanitary sewer system or otherwise discharging sewage anywhere other than to the City sanitary sewer system.

City employees' response to emergency sewer backup or other conditions, problems, or system failures will be documented on an "**Emergency Response Report Form**". The Public Works Director shall develop and provide Emergency Response Report Forms to all responding city employees. Emergency Response Report Forms will be completed by either the person on call or any other department employee who responds to the emergency call within 48 hours of completing their response to the call. If more than one employee responds to the call, the report shall be completed by one for the responding employees. The emergency report may be supplemented after 48 hours if additional information becomes available.

### III. Exercise of judgment and discretion

It is expected and intended that the Public Works Director will exercise both professional judgment and discretion in the development, modification and implementation of this policy.

It is expected that City employees will exercise their professional judgment in the implementation of this policy. It is expected that in emergency situations, City employees will be required to exercise their discretion and weigh political, social and economic considerations including both not limited to public and employee safety, the potential for damage to private property and the city sanitary sewer system, and environmental concerns.

Employees conducting either routine maintenance or responding to an emergency are expected to exercise discretion and their professional judgment to establish and utilize appropriate worksite traffic controls.

March 22, 2005

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager