



# Town of Kingston Springs

## Sewer System Questions and Answers

### **About the KS Sewer**

The sewer system in Kingston Springs was established in 1989. It is a gravity fed system with 12 pump stations around town to push waste to our treatment facility located at the end of Valley Drive. Please see the link [HERE](#) for additional information on our system.

### **Who is on sewer?**

The KS sewer system has approximately 750 customers. See a map [HERE](#) that shows where sewer service is available in Kingston Springs.

### **If I'm on sewer do I need a septic tank?**

Yes. Even if you are a sewer customer you still have a septic tank. Our sewer is a dual system which means for sewer customers the waste comes from the house to the septic tank first then discharges into the sewer lines. Solid matter and sediment sink to the bottom of the septic tank to be broken down by bacteria while the water moves through the tank to the sewer system.

### **Who pays for the sewer?**

Only sewer customers pay for use of the sewer and its maintenance. The sewer is an Enterprise Fund which means only the people that use the service pay for the service and its upkeep.

### **Is there anything wrong with the sewer system?**

The KS sewer system sees high levels of Inflow and Infiltration (I&I). I&I indicates excessive flow into our sewer system (especially after rains) and is primarily caused by holes, breaks, joint and connection failures in the system due to aging infrastructure.

### **Why is Inflow and Infiltration a problem?**

The KS sewer system is permitted and monitored by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and there are certain levels and standards on inflow and outflow that the Town must meet. Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) is one of those standards. While the town is not currently under a Notice of Violation from TDEC regarding our I&I levels, TDEC is aware our levels are exceeding the parameters of our permit and have requested the Town have a plan in place to fix the issue.

### **How is Inflow and Infiltration fixed?**

It's a two-step process that involves finding the issues and then fixing them. The first step is to accurately map the system while using a camera to scope the pipes and look for problem areas. Once these areas have been identified then repairs will be made. Since there are miles of sewer line that need to be inspected this will be a big undertaking. The sewer system will be divided into quadrants and flow meters at our pump stations around town will allow us to target and start with the areas we see that have the biggest needs.

### **How much will Inflow and Infiltration repair cost?**

The town has been working with our Wastewater Engineering firm over the last year to determine the best approach to resolving our Inflow and Infiltration issue and then determining the probable cost. The first step of the process, which is mapping the lines and locating the issues is estimated to cost almost \$3 Million. The next step, which is to repair and replace the damaged line is more difficult to estimate because it depends on the problems found. However, from our review of what we think the problems are it is estimated repairing the lines in our system will cost \$7 Million. So, total estimate for project cost will be \$10 Million.

### **How will repair to the sewer infrastructure expense be paid?**

As mentioned, only sewer customers pay for use of the sewer and its maintenance. Maintenance and repair of the sewer system is funded through the sewer rates so rates will need to increase over the next several years to cover the cost of these repairs.

### **Are there grants that can fund sewer infrastructure repairs?**

Possibly. The Town will receive \$800,000 in federal money through the American Rescue Plan and has applied for another \$700,000 grant through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). This would be enough to begin our exploration of the issue but clearly not enough to complete the project. The 2021 federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Infrastructure Bill) has a water component that is primarily geared to clean drinking water, and although there is not a grant avenue for wastewater there is an avenue for reduced loan costs. Details of the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are not solidified but it seems the intent is similar to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act so grant opportunities will most likely be limited. The Town is also working with the Middle Tennessee Industrial Development Association, the Greater Nashville Regional Council, and the Tennessee Association of Utility Districts to uncover any and all grant opportunities that may be available.

### **Is the Town going to sell the sewer system?**

In looking at the costs needed to repair the sewer system the town wanted to explore all options that may be available. One of those options would be to sell the system. To better explore that option the town has done research on the process of potentially selling the system as well as determining if there are any entities interested in purchasing the system, but no decisions have been made.

**What research has been done on selling the system?**

There were two questions to answer for research on potentially selling the system. First, what is the process from a regulatory standpoint, and second, are there entities interested in purchasing our system. For the regulatory information the Town consulted with and received advice from the Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service, Tennessee Association of Utility Districts, Tennessee Comptrollers Office, Tennessee Public Utilities Commission, and other municipalities.

**Why were proposals to purchase the sewer system requested?**

As part of exploring different options related to our sewer system the possibility of selling the system was discussed. To see if this was a viable option, and to determine if there are any entities interested in purchasing the system, proposals to purchase the system were requested. Although these proposals were requested it doesn't mean one must be accepted.

**Were any received?**

Yes, one proposal was received. It came from Central States Water Resources and can be found [HERE](#).

**What happens next?**

The Town of Kingston Springs continues to explore all options related to the needs of our sewer system. A Public Hearing was held to receive feedback from the community and additional public meetings will be set as new information becomes available.