

Attachment C:
Connect to Protect Grinder Sewer
Program Policy

BOARD DIRECTED POLICY

To: County Staff	From: Taryn Kryzda, County Administrator
Subject: CONNECT TO PROTECT GRINDER SEWER PROGRAM POLICY	
Effective Date: March 26, 2019	Created by: Utilities & Solid Waste Department
BCC Meeting: March 26, 2019	Agenda #: DEPT-2 Item #: 19-0223

PURPOSE

The objective of the Martin County Connect to Protect Grinder Sewer Program (Program) is to accelerate the Martin County Board of County Commissioners directive to implement a coordinated septic tank elimination program within the Martin County Utility Service Territory.

POLICY

This grinder program is only available to single family and duplex residential properties that are considered 1 Equivalent Residential Unit, which equates to 250 gallons per day of wastewater flow. Each grinder system installed under this program will be owned and maintained by the Martin County Utilities Department (MCU).

Sewer Availability

MCU has a network of transmission force mains ranging in size from 8 inches to 24 inches in diameter. These force mains were designed to be transmission mains from lift stations to convey wastewater to a wastewater treatment plant. These mains were not designed to be used for multiple connections of individual grinder stations.

In an effort to assist both existing and new homeowners eliminate the use of a septic tank and drain field, Martin County Utilities will allow a homeowner who has a 6-inch diameter or smaller force main available to the property, as defined in Florida Statutes 381.0065(2)(a) Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; regulation, to participate in the Program.

At the discretion of MCU, in areas where there is an 8-inch diameter force main or larger, MCU may construct a parallel force main of smaller diameter to facilitate connection of multiple grinders to the system. The decision on whether to construct a parallel force main will be based on multiple factors including, but not limited to, constructability, ample Right-Of-Way, homeowners' interest in connection, and funding availability. If a parallel force main is not deemed feasible, MCU will issue a waiver to the Martin County Health Department for either a repair or new septic tank permit at the property.

Existing force mains will not be extended into neighborhoods that have been determined to be serviced by either vacuum sewer or a gravity sewer system as shown in the Martin County Septic System Elimination Report prepared by Captec Engineering, Inc. dated February 13, 2015. These areas will follow the Martin County Septic-to-Sewer Assessment Program and will be granted septic system repair/replacement waivers.

Extensions of Force Mains

As funding allows, MCU will extend small diameter (6-inch or less) force mains into both the prioritized and non-prioritized communities. These mains will be installed in locations as determined by MCU Director (or designee) based upon multiple criteria including but not limited to priority ranking in the Martin County Septic System Elimination Report, proximity of existing force main and capacity of this force main to handle the additional flows, petitions from homeowners, and other criteria as determined by MCU Director (or designee). Force mains shall

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not be extended into areas that are not currently served with potable water or proposed to be served via a special assessment with potable water.

MCU will notify all affected residents in each community at least 30 days before constructing the force main system. Once installed, MCU will notify the homeowners that the system is now available and connection to system is encouraged, however it is not mandatory unless the existing septic system fails. Once the existing septic system fails and a small diameter force main is available, MCU will not issue a waiver to the Health Department and the parcel owner will be required to connect to MCU's force main system.

Connection to the System with Existing Force Mains

Parcel owners who currently have access to an existing force main as described in the sewer availability section above will not receive a letter. These parcel owners will be evaluated as they request service and the fees associated with the conversion will be charged the same as the rates for Agreements signed within 12 months of notification.

Areas identified in the three-year work plan as shown in the current adopted Capital Improvement Plan are excluded from the Grinder Program and will be granted septic system repair/replacement waivers.

Connection to the System in areas the Force Mains have been extended after the date of this policy

Once a parcel owner has requested service, MCU will meet with the parcel owner to determine the specifics on the existing system and to go over location of existing septic tank, location of new grinder system, and connection of electric service. No work will begin until Agreement is executed and applicable fees paid.

The electric service will be installed by a Licensed Electrical Contractor hired and managed directly by MCU. The Electrical Contractor will be responsible for providing power to the new grinder system electrical disconnect. If any upgrades are needed to the home's existing electrical panel, the homeowner will be responsible for this work, including all costs.

A licensed Contractor will complete the installation of the grinder system, small diameter discharge force main, abandonment of the septic tank, and restoration of disturbed areas.

The fee charged to each parcel owner includes the electrical work from the homeowners existing electrical panel to a disconnect near the grinder system, installation of the grinder tank and pump, installation of the control panel, installation of the small diameter force main from the grinder system tank to the force main system in the County Right-Of-Way (or equivalent easement location), tapping the force main, connection of the house lateral to the grinder tank, pump out of the existing septic tank, demolition and filling with clean fill of the existing septic tank, sod restoration, and all permits required per MCU Standards.

Additional costs for non-standard installations such as multiple septic tanks, electrical upgrades or runs over 100 feet, force main installation greater than 75 feet, extensive landscaping, or gravity installation over 20 feet shall be paid for by the owner up and above the base conversion fee. Additional costs will be identified prior to execution of Agreement.

As part of the service, once the fee is paid and agreement is signed, the County (or County's Contractor) will provide no cost septic tank pump outs as necessary until the County's grinder

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system installation is complete.

Cost of Connection

Conversion Fees (Existing Home and Septic System)	
Agreement signed within 12 months of notification and paid in full	\$8,000
Agreement signed within 12 months of notification and paid via 120 monthly installments of \$80 per month at 0% interest	\$9,600
Agreement signed after 12 months of notification and paid in full	\$10,000
Agreement signed after 12 months of notification and paid via 120 monthly installments of \$95 per month at 0% interest	\$11,400

New Construction	
Agreement signed and paid in full	\$7,000

**Amendment to the above fee table requires Board of County Commissioner approval

*If a parcel is bought and service is available, the new parcel owner has 90 days from the date of closing to receive the same costs associated with Agreements that are signed within 12 months of notification.

After the 90 days from the date of closing, the new parcel owner will pay the rates associated with Agreements signed after 12 months of notification.

**Depending on the Utilities budget that is available, only the amount of customers budgeted per fiscal year will be allowed to use the option of paying monthly installments. If the budget has been depleted for the fiscal year, the customer can either opt to pay in full or be put on a waiting list for the next fiscal year. However once signed up and fees paid, the County will provide septic tank pump out services as necessary until the County system can be installed.

All fees above include Capital Facility Charges (CFCs). There will be an additional deposit per the current rate schedule and refundable after two years if the account remains in good standing. This additional deposit may be waived if the customer is currently a water customer and has an account in good standing.

If the monthly installment plan is selected, the installment plan must be in the parcel owner's name.

Ownership and Maintenance (Department)

Department Owned and Maintained Grinder System

For a Department Owned and Maintained Grinder System, MCU will be responsible for the ownership and maintenance of the lateral to the property line, the isolation valve and check valve for the small diameter force main, the box for the check valve, the small diameter force main from the check valve to the grinder station, the grinder station, the grinder pump, the controller, and the electric up to the electrical disconnect.

The homeowner will be responsible for the ownership and maintenance of the electrical disconnect installed near the grinder station, the electrical service to the electrical disconnect, and the gravity lateral to the grinder station. Cost of the monthly power to the station is the responsibility of the owner.

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The Installation and Maintenance Agreement for Residential Grinder Pump System has specific requirements for the accessibility and landscaping around the system. If MCU grinder system that is installed no longer meets the requirements of the referenced Agreement, MCU will not maintain the system until the area is brought back into compliance.

MCU will maintain the system and provide any repairs or cleaning of elements MCU would consider necessary as part of the normal operation of the system. Items that are considered outside of normal operation of the system include, but are not limited to, clogging of the pumps/probe caused by items that should not be flushed (a list of items not to flush will be given to the homeowner at MCU Grinder Station start-up), excessive amounts of grease in the grinder station, or any other items MCU Director deems abnormal. Any repairs or additional pump outs outside of the normal will be billed at cost directly to the homeowner.

During power outages the grinder system and alarm will not operate, and the homeowner should minimize their water use. The reserve volume will allow for infrequent toilet flushing and brief water use for a short period. The controller is equipped with a generator receptacle, so the homeowner has the option to power the grinder system with a private generator if they would like to and specifics on the size of the generator, type of power cord, and instructions for powering the system will be provided by MCU at the grinder system start-up.

Parcels with Multiple Septic Tanks

For properties with multiple septic tanks that cannot be interconnected to feed via gravity to one (1) grinder system, the homeowner must install and maintain a second, third, etc. grinder system to pump directly to MCU owned and maintained station. The homeowner installed and maintained grinder station pump curves need to be submitted for approval to MCU and cannot pump greater than 12 gallons per minute to avoid overwhelming MCU maintained system.

Location of Grinder Systems for New Construction

The owner of a new house that intends to participate in the Program must submit a site plan with the proposed location of the plumbing cleanout, grinder system, small diameter force main, and force main tap for review and approval from Martin County Utilities. The location of the grinder system must be located as shown on MCU's Details.

If the homeowner does not comply with this requirement, MCU will not allow the homeowner to move forward with MCU owned and maintained grinder system. The homeowner will then need to install a private grinder system and obtain all required approvals.

TKryzda 4/5/2019

Taryn Kryzda, County Administrator

Suppression History:

None