

Coburg Wastewater Project
Septic Tank Replacement

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1. What is the purpose of the Coburg Wastewater Project?

Answer: The purpose of the Coburg Wastewater Project is to construct a wastewater treatment facility and sewage collection system that meets all the regulatory requirements and can be constructed as efficiently as possible. The project responds to dangerous levels of pollutants (nitrates) that have been detected in the ground water serving as the City's drinking water. A municipal wastewater system also allows property owners more flexibility to develop their property as they choose (no more drainfields). More details of the City's wastewater project history can be found on the City's website: www.coburgoregon.org.

2. As a homeowner or property owner, what costs can I expect as the project is constructed and operated?

Answer: Several grants and loans will help pay for the project. Home owners and property owners will fund part of the cost of construction, operation, and maintenance of the treatment plant and collection system. During construction, the City will charge water users an interim or construction fee. This fee, of \$50 a month for each EDU, will be used to pay City costs of the project, and to avoid long term borrowing. After the project is completed, property owners will pay:

1. Monthly user rates – estimated at \$83 per month (this cost may change, and could be higher or lower)
2. One time Local Improvement District (LID) assessment – (this cost is estimated at \$0.174 per SQ FT of property and could go lower or higher)

Properties that do not pay the LID assessment will be subject to a Systems Development Charge (SDC) at the time of connection after the project is completed. The Coburg Urban Renewal Agency collects a portion of property taxes to help pay for the project. Questions regarding monthly user rates, LID assessment and general questions regarding total project costs and other funding related questions should be directed to the Project Contact.

3. What portion of the project will involve construction on my property?

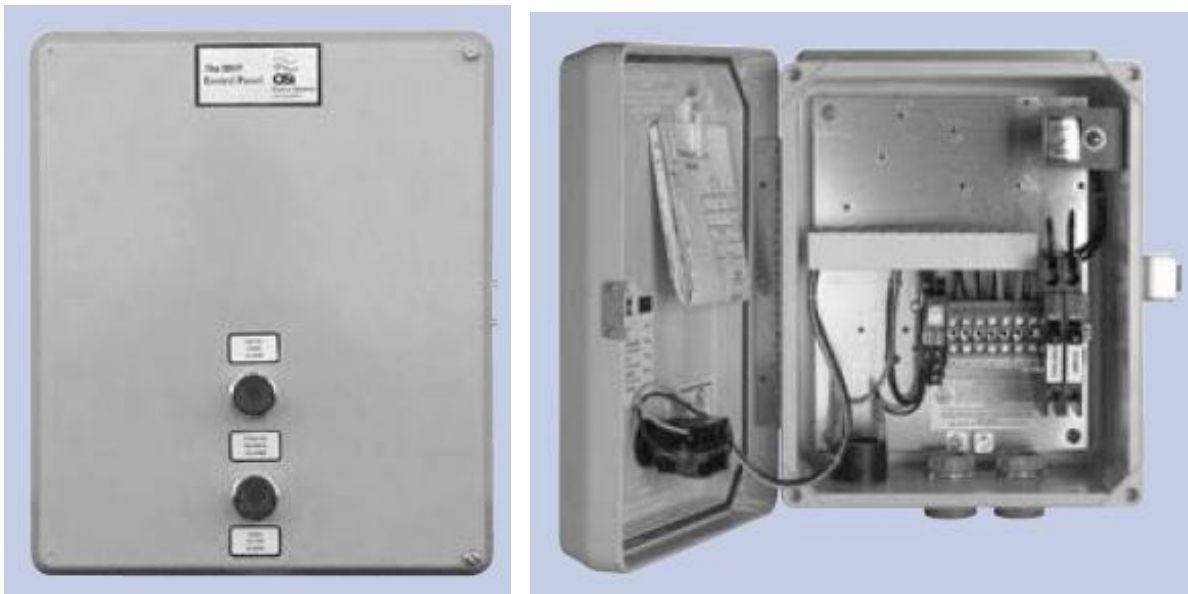
Answer: Phase 4 of the project will include the final phase of construction, connecting residences and businesses to the collection system. This portion of work will start with an initial investigation by City and engineering staff in the spring and summer of 2011. This investigation will evaluate septic system for suitability for continued service within the City-owned wastewater system. In order for any work to be done on the property, the City will need to obtain an easement from the property owner giving the City permission to come on the property to investigate and install the necessary components of the system. All developed properties will need a connection between the collection system in the street and the STEP tank and be disconnected from the current drainfield. Some properties will not need anything more. Other properties will need some upgrades to their existing septic tank (such as a pump and an electrical connection). Other properties, where the current tank is too small, or leaks, or does not meet the minimum standards, will need to have a new tank installed. All this will be determined during the site visits and worked out in conjunction with the property owner.

4. What will be the evaluation criteria that will determine the nature of work to take place on my property?

Answer: Generally, in order to remain in use, a septic tank must be no older than 15 years, have two compartments (baffled tank), and have an effluent pump or be suitable for pump retrofit. The collection system is a S.T.E.P. system (Septic Tank Effluent Pump) meaning that each septic tank will have a pump to convey effluent that used to go to your drainfield into the new collection system and treatment facility. Steel tanks, no matter the age, will not be accepted and will be replaced. Fiberglass tanks may be accepted and may remain in service. The location of the existing tank will also factor into whether it can remain in service or will need to be replaced. This is because City staff and septage haulers will need to be able to access the tank for maintenance.

5. What other components will be a part of the system, and who pays for electricity?

Answer: The septic tank will have a pump and pump control panel which will be installed at every tank. Control panels will be mounted on homeowners' exterior walls and will require connection to the electrical panel. The location of the control panel is flexible only to the extent allowed by electrical code requirements that will ultimately govern location. The homeowner will pay the electrical bill for pump operation. Typical electricity costs for pump operation will be between \$0.20 and \$0.30 per month.



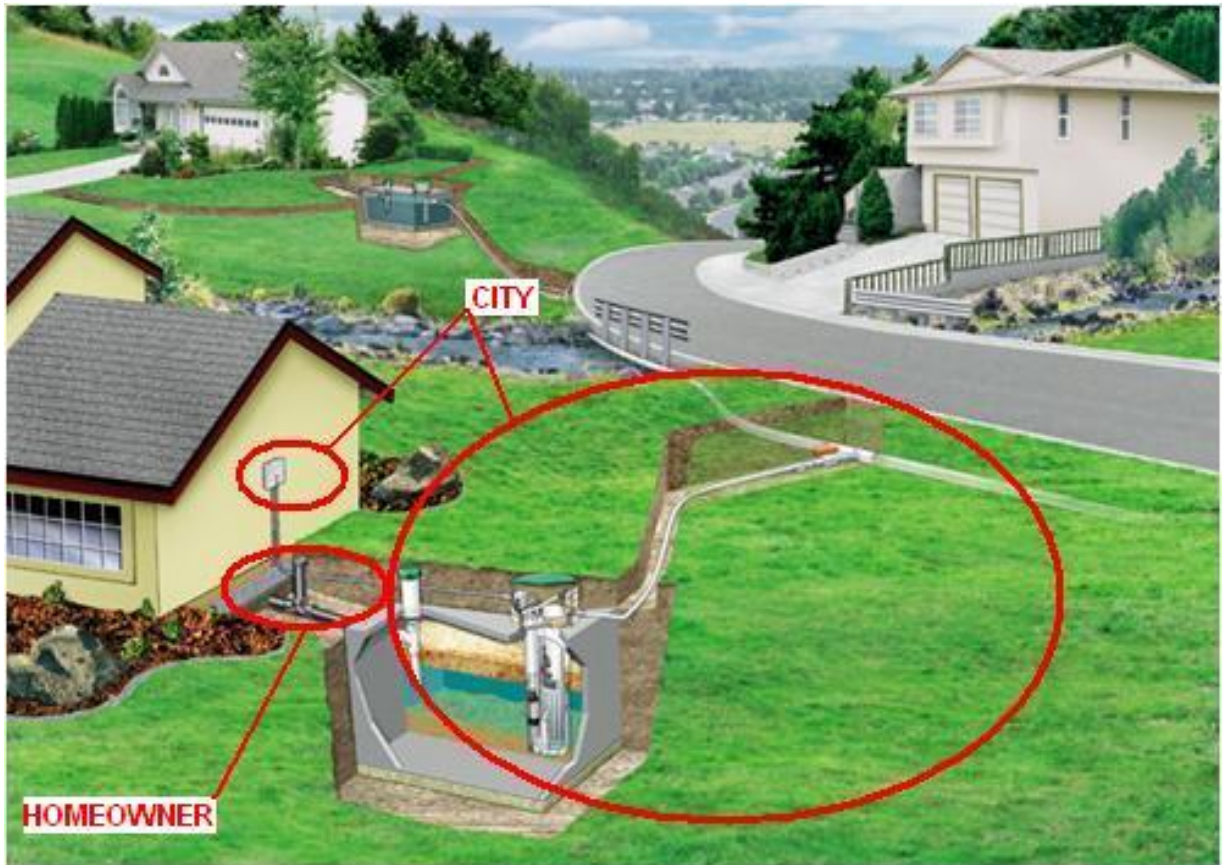
Typical Pump Control Panel

6. How long will construction take on my property?

Answer: The duration of construction activities on your property will depend on the nature of the work required. Construction time could range from 1 day to 1 week. Each home and business owner will likely need to stop all wastewater discharges for a period of 2-4 hours at some point during the construction to make the switch over to new the new tank if one is being installed.

7. Since construction is taking place on my property, what am I responsible for maintaining, and what is the City responsible for maintaining?

Answer: The City will be responsible for maintaining the system up to the upstream end of the septic tank (whether the existing tank is to be replaced or not), where the building drain line connects to the tank as shown on the illustration on the following page. The maintenance of the tank, associated equipment, pump and pump control panel, and all other piping for making the connection to the collection system will be the City's responsibility. Maintenance of the drain line upstream of the tank and back to the building will be the responsibility of the homeowner. A maintenance easement on your property is what allows the City to come onto your property to maintain and service the tank and pump.



STEP TANK MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

8. What easements are required and what do they cover?

Answer: Two easements are required; (1) a temporary blanket easement and (2) a permanent maintenance easement. The temporary blanket easement needs to be signed by the home or business owner before any inspection or construction can begin. This easement is temporary and covers the inspection, planning and construction portion of the work on your property. The permanent easement needs to be signed by the business or home owner, notarized and recorded with the City before construction of the Phase 4 project is advertised for bid.

Homeowners or business owners that do not submit notarized permanent easement prior to advertisement will not be included in the construction project. Easements can be notarized at Coburg City Hall free of charge.

9. What measures will be taken to protect my property from damage during construction and to ensure that my property is returned to its original condition?

Answer: The existing condition of your property will be photographed to document the conditions prior to construction. Restoration will be performed by the Contractor in a timely manner after construction is complete.

10. How frequently will the City need to come onto my property to perform maintenance?

Answer: The City will need to perform maintenance periodically to replace pumps, clear alarms, and pump down the septic tank. Tank pump downs will occur about every four years. Repairs and replacements of equipment will occur as needed, but are not expected to occur more often than once every several years.

11. When will construction take place?

Answer: The initial investigation of septic systems will begin in April and will last through September 2011. A representative of the City and of the Engineer will visit each business and residence to perform the evaluation. Actual construction will take place during 2012.

12. As a homeowner, what should I do and who should I contact if my plans for my property need to be coordinated with the wastewater project?

Answer: Should you need to contact the City to coordinate any building plans or if you have any questions about your septic system and the up-coming tank evaluations please contact the project contact listed at the top of this FAQ.

13. What if I don't participate and hook-up my system to the new facilities, or miss the permanent easement deadline?

Answer: There will be several opportunities to participate in the project and submit the easement. The City strongly encourages property owners to take advantage of the opportunity to participate. Participation will not increase any property owner's costs, and it will avoid costs that the property owner would otherwise have to pay. Ultimately, however, if a property owner does not submit the easement before the Phase 4 project goes out to bid, the City will not be able to connect that property as a part of the construction project, and therefore will not be able to use project funds to cover the cost of the connection. The property will still be subject to the Local Improvement District assessment and to sewer rates. After the project is completed and the collection system sewer is available, all developed properties will be required by law to connect to the sewer system. The City has the authority to take enforcement action against property owners that fail to connect to the wastewater system as required by ordinance, including shutting off water service to the property until a wastewater connection is made.

14. What is an EDU?

Answer: An EDU is an Equivalent Dwelling Unit. This is a measure used to standardize wastewater flows. A residence is one EDU. Multifamily properties, and commercial and industrial users are calculated in terms of number of EDUs, based on the volume of winter water use. Winter water use is used because during that time, most, if not all, of the water used on a property goes into the wastewater system. EDUs are not calculated as fractions. Any use up to 840 cubic feet per month is one EDU. Between 840 cubic feet and 1680 cubic feet per month is counted as two EDU, and so forth.

15. Has Coburg considered connecting to the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission (MWMC) Eugene/Springfield regional system instead of building its own wastewater system?

Answer: Yes, connecting Coburg to MWMC's Eugene/Springfield system was thoroughly evaluated in 2007 and 2008. The evaluation concluded that connecting Coburg to MWMC's Eugene/Springfield system would be about 25 percent more expensive than an independent system developed by the City of Coburg. One of the reasons connecting to MWMC was found to be more expensive was a nearly \$9M connection fee that Coburg would have to pay MWMC. In addition to the connection fee, Coburg would also have to fund the construction of a new wastewater collection and pump station system to convey Coburg's wastewater to Eugene. An independent system developed by the City of Coburg was found to be a better option because it is less costly than connecting to MWMC's Eugene/Springfield system and provides the citizens of Coburg local control of future planning and decision making.