CITY OF NORTHERN



# CITY OF NORTHERN

## HOMEOWNER'S SEWER CONNECTION GUIDE

V2 Fall 2026

## Note

The information in this packet is preliminary and subject to change as the project progresses. The numbers and information provided are approximate and may be adjusted as the project moves closer to completion. Please check the City of Northern website (cityofnorthern.gov) for updates and the most recent version of this guide.

## Connection Process

As the City's sewer construction progresses within the roadway, a sewer service stub will be installed within the City's right-of-way (FIGURE 1), and left at your property line based on the information you provided in your Sewer Connection Form.

Please be aware that the City's right-of-way generally extends beyond the paved surface of the road. During sewer construction, the City will not be responsible for any damage to private property located within the public right-of-way such as plantings, bulbs, flowers, shrubbery, irrigation systems, fences, light poles, etc. Items such as these should be relocated out of the right-of-way prior to construction. The City will make its Administrator and engineering representatives available for on-site meetings to discuss specific questions, concerns and unique considerations at any parcel, in advance of construction activity taking place.

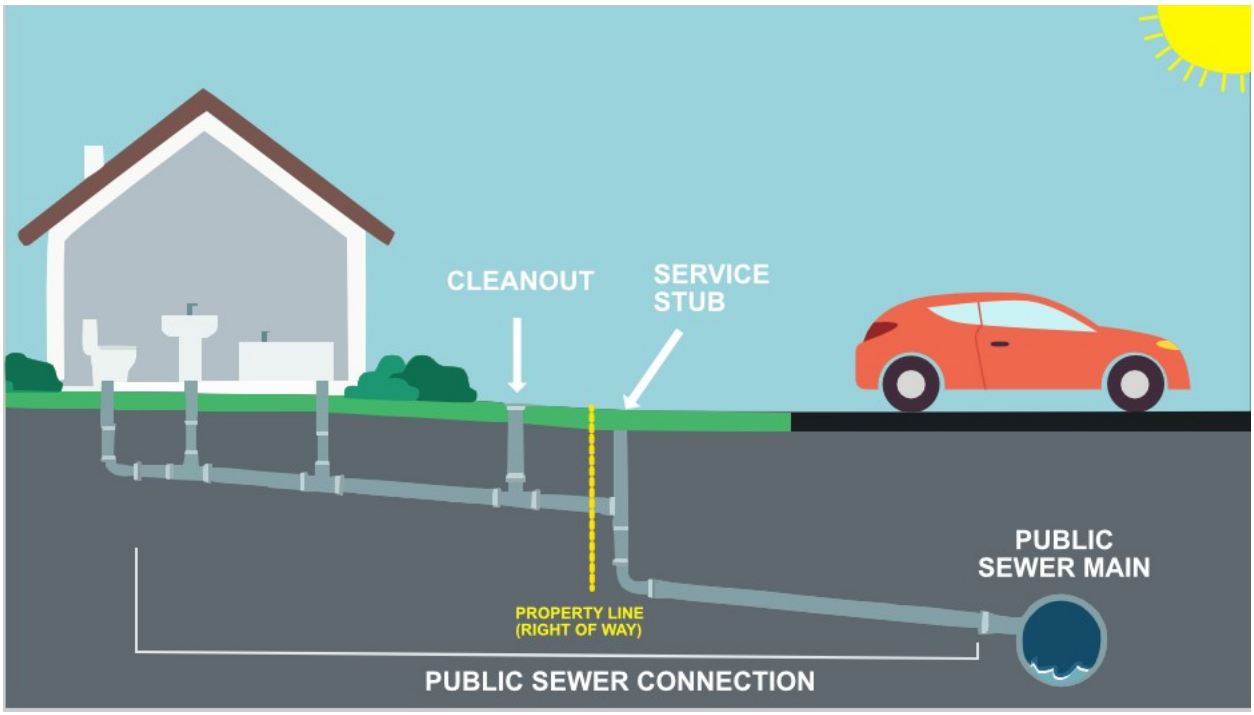


Figure 1: SAMPLE COMPLETED SEWER CONNECTION

**Steps for Residents to Connect to the System**

1. Project Completion Letter

Prior to completion of sewer construction, the City of Northern will mail all eligible property owners a letter of project completion. This letter will include further instructions on the next steps to begin the connection process.

2. City Sewer Construction

As sewer construction progresses within the roadway, a sewer service stub will be installed within the City right-of-way, to your property line. This stub is what you will ultimately connect to in the future.

3. Notice of Sewer Connection Hookup

Once the newly expanded sewer system is deemed active, the City of Northern will issue a Notice of Sewer Connection Hookup for all properties eligible to connect to municipal sewer. In accordance with the forthcoming City of Northern Sewer Policy, property owners will be required to connect to the municipal sewer system within 5 to 15 years of receiving notification, depending on the age of the property's current septic system.

4. Hire a Licensed Sewer Installer

Once you have received your Notice of Sewer Connection Hookup, you will need to hire a licensed sewer installer (Appendix B). Your licensed sewer installer will do the actual construction on your property and will be responsible for applying for the necessary permits.

In most cases, a qualified sewer installer is sufficient for both design and implementation; however, in a limited number of cases it may be necessary to also secure the services of a licensed professional civil engineer to assist with your sewer connection. The connection must comply with the City of Northern's sewer connection specifications. Your contractor will assist you in determining the most effective way to arrange pipes on your property.

5. Sewer Connection

Your licensed sewer installer will apply for necessary permits prior to commencing work on your property. Contractors are required to contact the City of Northern 48 hours prior to construction so that the City can schedule an inspection. Ultimately, construction on your private property will consist of connecting the septic pipe that exits your building(s) to the sewer service stub installed at your property line. This will require excavation and installing pipe between those two points.

6. Inspection Process

An authorized City inspector will inspect the connection to City sewer to ensure it complies with the City of Northern’s specifications. A sewer connection tie card will be generated, documenting the location and details of the connection and underground components, which will be maintained in City records. The City will then update its records that your property is ready for sewer service billing.

7. On-Site Septic System Abandonment

Any components of a SSTS, cesspool, or other similar system that will no longer be used must be abandoned in accordance with Minnesota Rule 7080.2500. The owner or owner's agent must submit a completed record of abandonment to the Beltrami Environmental Service Department within 15 days of abandonment.

All septic system related questions should be directed to Beltrami County Environmental Services at 218-333-4158 or the City of Northern at 218-751-4989 or via email at info@cityofnorthern.gov.

8. Sewer Service Billing

Property owners will be charged a monthly sewer fee. Current sewer service rates and billing resources are located at https://www.cityofnorthern.gov/. For questions regarding your sewer bill, please contact the City of Northern at 218-751-4989.

**A note about commercial properties**

While much of the information shared about the sewer connection process will be applicable to commercial properties, commercial property owners, including apartment and condominium communities, are encouraged to reach out to the City of Northern at 218-751-4989 to learn more.

## Financial Commitment

1. Assessment Rate and Payment Options
    - Assessments for access to the wastewater collection system are based on Equivalent Benefited Frontage (EBF). Current projections from the updated October 2026 cost estimates put the average residential assessment at about $18,000.

- The average lot measures 85 EBF. The City's goal is to bring that average back to about $14,000, matching the 2024 estimate, through a state Point Source Implementation Grant (PSIG), other grants, and competitive bids. Final amounts depend on the funding secured and actual construction costs.
- Assessments take effect when the system is installed regardless of when a resident chooses to hook up.
- A property owner can opt to pay the Sewer Assessment all at once when due or may opt to finance the Sewer Assessment and pay installments via their property tax bill over 15 to 20 years at an interest rate of 2% above the City's borrowing rate.

2. Connection Timeline and cost
    - Residents will have 5 to 15 years from the date of the Project Completion Letter to connect to the new system, depending on the age of their current septic system. A one-time connection fee of $2,000 applies.
    - Early connection will be encouraged to ensure adequate flows for efficient plant operation by waiving the connection fee for hook ups within the first year.

3. Assessment Relief Options
    - State-mandated assessment relief options are available under Minnesota Statute 435.193 for hardship cases, including seniors, disabled individuals, and military persons. See Appendix 1 for more information.

4. Connection and Removal Costs

- Property owners are responsible for the cost of connecting to the wastewater system.
- Property owners are responsible for the cost of removal of old septic systems if they choose to do so, however removal will not be required. Contact Beltrami County Environmental Services at 218-333-4158 for more information on the process for abandoning your septic system.

5. Monthly Service Fee
    - Once connected, individual households (single family residential) will be charged a monthly service fee of approximately $65 per Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) for the maintenance and operation of the wastewater system.
    - Commercial, non-single family residential properties will be billed based on the multiple of a single-family residential user that their generated flow represents.

## Timeline and Key Dates

- Bidding and Land Acquisition: January to March 2027
- Contracts Awarded: March to April 2027
- Construction Begins: April to May 2027, coordinated with the Beltrami County CSAH 20 reconstruction
- Phase 1 Construction Complete: July 2028 (target)
- Phase 2: Timing depends on additional funding; Phase 2 is estimated at about $8 million

- Mandatory Connection Deadline: Residents will have 5 to 15 years from the date of the Project Completion Letter to connect, depending on the age of their current septic system.
- Dates are targets and depend on MPCA approval, bids, and coordination with Beltrami County.

**Contact Information for Further Inquiries**

For additional questions and assistance, residents can contact the City of Northern office at 218-751-4989 or info@cityofnorthern.gov.

# Appendix A: Special Assessment Deferrals

## What is a Special Assessment Deferral?

As the name implies, it is a deferral of the special assessment amount that must be paid, with compounded interest, at some time in the future. It is not an exemption, exclusion, or forgiveness of any amount due.

## Who Authorizes the Deferral of Special Assessments?

Minnesota Statues, Sections 435.193 through 435.195 authorizes municipalities to defer the payments of special assessments.

## What Assessments Are Eligible for the Deferment?

Only special assessments for permanent improvements are eligible. Current and/or delinquent service charges are not eligible. Service charges include, but are not limited to water and sewer service, tree removal, weed removal, storm drainage

charges, street maintenance, administrative citations and the clean up of grossly unsanitary dwellings.

## How Do I Qualify for the Special Assessment Deferment?

To qualify for the special assessment deferment, all of the following are required:

- The applicant must be 65 years of age or older, or retired by virtue of a permanent and total disability. A permanent and total disability is defined as a condition which is permanent by nature and which totally incapacitates the person from working at an occupation that affords the person an income. Members of the National Guard, or other reserves ordered to active military service for whom it would be a hardship to make payments, may also qualify.
- The applicant must be the fee simple owner of the property or must be a contract vendor for fee simple ownership, and
- The property for which deferment is requested must be classified and taxed as homestead property by the County Assessor as of the date the application for deferment is made. The first year's installment of the proposed special assessment must, either alone or in the aggregate with installments of other special assessments due against the property and payable in the first year of the proposed assessment, total more than 2% of the applicant's total household income as defined by Minnesota Statues, Chapter 290A.
- The deferral becomes a lien against the property.

- **Active Duty Military Reserves:** In 2008 the MN Legislature amended the statute to include property owned by a person who is ordered into active military service, as defined in section 190.05 subdivision 5b or 5c, as stated in the person's military orders, for whom it would be a hardship to make payments.

## How Do I Apply for the Special Assessment Deferment?

Contact the City of Northern:

445 Town Hall Rd NW
Northern, MN 56601
Phone: 218-751-4989

## When Will the Deferral End?

The deferral will automatically terminate if:

- The owner dies and the spouse is not otherwise eligible for the deferral, or
- the parcel or any part thereof is sold, transferred, or subdivided, or
- the parcel loses it's homestead status, or
- the City determines the owner or the owner's spouse no longer qualifies, or
- the owner terminates the deferral.

Upon termination of the deferral, the deferred special assessments are due and payable had there been no deferral, together with all compound interest.

## What Can I Do If My Application is Denied?

The City Administrator reviews the applications for consistency with and conformance to the standards and guidelines prescribed in the ordinance and will either grant or deny the application. If your application is denied, you may appeal to the City Council.

# Appendix B: Licensed Sewer Installers

The list of licensed sewer installers can be found on the Beltrami County Environmental Services website here (click on “Professional Septic Contractors” at bottom of page):

https://www.co.beltrami.mn.us/business-development/environmental-services/septic-system-management/

**BELTRAMI COUNTY**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**MPCA LICENSED SSTS PROFESSIONALS**

***BELTRAMI COUNTY***

**Beltrami County Environmental Services Department**
**701 Minnesota Avenue NW, Suite 113**
**Bemidji, MN 56601-3064**

**Phone: 218-333-4158**

**Disclaimer**

This list is current as of January 2024. Please check MPCA website for current list of licensed professionals

http://www.pca.state.mn.us