

# Resident Sewer Connection Manual for the Ballston Lake Sewer Project

Towns of Ballston & Clifton Park, NY



*Photo by Brad Callahan*

Prepared by the Ballston Lake Sewer Committee  
June 4, 2021

Revised June 15, 2022

*This document has been prepared by the Clean Water Committee, representing residents of both the Town of Ballston and the Town of Clifton Park. The purpose is to assist residents in understanding the sewer project and what they need to do to connect to the Saratoga County sewer system. The content has been reviewed and approved by the Saratoga County Sewer District.*

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## Background

The Ballston Lake/ Buell Heights sewer project was originally approved by a referendum of voters in September of 2015 and reaffirmed in a second referendum by both towns in 2019. A local firm Adirondack Mountain Engineering (AME) was hired by the Town of Ballston to design the project and manage construction. The project spans two towns, Town of Ballston and Clifton Park. The sewers along the east side of the lake will consist of a low-pressure system that will start at the beginning of East Side Drive in the Town of Clifton Park and will traverse the east side of the lake into the Town of Ballston ultimately connecting to the County pump station at the Stonebridge development. On the west side of the Lake, gravity sewers are being installed in the Buell Heights/ Main Street area connecting to a pump station across the street from Carney's Tavern, next to the old Stewarts shop. From the pump station a combination force main/low pressure sewer is being installed north on Westside Drive, along the west side of the lake, east on Outlet Road, below the bridge to Lake Road and then turning north on Lake Road and connecting to the County sewer system near Shenentaha Park.

## Project Resources

The system has been designed by Adirondack Mountain Engineering (AME). The Buell Heights gravity sewers are being constructed by Trinity Construction. The sewers from the pump station up Westside Drive, along the West side of the Lake and connecting at Shenentaha are being built by Vacri Construction. The low-pressure sewer along East Side Drive will be constructed by Drilling Technologies. Tech Industries will construct the remainder of the line from the Town of Ballston boundary along the east side of the lake, up Lake Road and connecting at the Stonebridge pump station.

Until the debt is paid off, the sewer system and its easements will be owned by the Town of Ballston. The Saratoga County Sewer District (hereafter known as *SCSD 1*), has agreed to provide maintenance and operation. The ownership will transfer to the County when the debt service is paid off.

## Overview

Most of the sewer system will be low pressure because of the rise and fall of the terrain. This will require each residence in the low-pressure section to have a grinder pump. A grinder pump takes the sewage and grinds it into a slurry and then injects that slurry into the low-pressure sewer main. There are several one-way valves that assure the contents can only go in one direction. Saratoga County has standardized on a grinder pump manufactured by [Environment One](#) (E-One). E-One is a local Niskayuna business and a world leader in low pressure sewer systems. The system, from grinder pump to the county wastewater treatment plant, requires consistent overall construction to ensure proper hydraulic operation of the

system. The Buell Heights / Main Street section, as a result of the downhill terrain, will use a conventional sewer piping system that uses gravity to ensure proper flow of wastewater. Most properties will not require a pump. However, there are a few properties in Buell Heights where a contractor will determine that the elevations are such that a pump will be required to move wastewater uphill to get to the gravity portion of the sewer system. These residents should consult with their contractor to select a pump to best fit their particular requirements.

All sewer construction contractors have executed construction contracts beginning in early October 2020 and have officially been given notice of right to proceed by the Town. The contracts specify completion within 24 months which would place construction completion around early October of 2022 if not sooner (contractors receive final payment upon completion and are therefore incentivized to complete as quickly as possible). Resident connections will occur after the system has been constructed, tested, and certified. Once the system has been tested, certified, and transferred to the Saratoga County Sewer District for operation, residents will be notified by their respective towns concerning connection.

Residents will be notified by the construction contractors prior to work beginning near their properties. Notices will include contact information for the Engineer in case issues arise.

As contractors work in an area, they have been asked to stake out the proposed connection point location for the property. These locations were previously established based on responses received from resident surveys or chosen by the Engineer based on the location of the home on the property. Residents should review this connection point and notify the Engineer, Contractor, or Field staff at (518) 250-1932 if they would like the connection point location adjusted. Requests will be accommodated to the extent feasible. Service extensions and locations may be constrained by property lines, easement boundaries or other factors.

Residents are advised that, in general, when the sewer line is on the opposite side of the street from their residence, the sewer district contractor will be responsible for extending the service under the road to connect to the resident's property line.

## Finding a Contractor

Although it is not a requirement, most residents will want to hire a contractor to install their connection. Contractors who do this type of work usually work with plumbers and electricians to perform those tasks as needed. Residents are advised to contact several contractors and obtain written quotes. Discussions should confirm insurance and include warranties and site cleanup, reseeding.

## Potential Contractor List – revised June 2022

The following list of contractors is provided to assist residents with contractors who have expressed interest in working on this project. In addition to these contractors, the septic service which residents currently use to maintain their septic system may also be interested in doing service connections. Residents may select any contractor they choose, regardless of this list, with the understanding that all connections must be inspected by the County and conform to their standards which are delineated on the County Sewer Website.

Bellamy Construction *	518-214-4082	
Charlton Septic	518-399-1323	
D. E. Flynn Excavation	518-399-3577	
D H Dirt Services	518-376-7059	
Holmes Excavation	518-884-2931	
Morningstar Septic *	518-793-2290	
Odorless Sanitary Cleaners	518-399-3482	
Perry Construction *	518-944-7571	
Peter K. Frueh	518-528-3389	groups of 6 or more
Stone Industries *	518-584-1048	
Tholin Excavating	518-857-7498	
Mark Voelker *	518-376-8413	

\*Certified E/One installer

## Designing the connection

Things to consider when working with your contractor. Be prepared to identify the location of your:

- Existing septic
- Gas line/underground propane
- Municipal water or well line
- Underground utilities: electric, cable, telephone
- Sprinkler systems
- If you already have a previous survey of your property, make a copy for discussion

What is the best path to the street from your existing system, avoiding driveways and other objects? If the existing septic system is on the back of the house, and if there is an unfinished basement, it is sometimes less expensive to replumb the house piping to exit out the street side of the basement than to excavate from the back of the house. A contractor should be able to assist you in these decisions.

There are specific requirements for separation of sewer and water lines. Residents should consult with their contractor to comply with appropriate codes.

Some older houses have dry wells for grey water, i.e., laundry. If this is the case, the plumbing must be changed to discharge the grey water into the sewer. Dry wells are common in older areas, but they do not meet current code because grey water is basically released into the ground unfiltered.

Consider the price discount schedule in your timing decision. If you need a grinder pump the project has a front-end discounted pricing schedule as an incentive to residents to connect early. Quick connections to the system are helpful to support smooth operation. However, residents may choose to connect at their convenience within the rules of their respective Town Sewer Use Law.

Speak with several contractors to ensure that they have the proper set of expectations regarding:

- Safe closure of existing septic system in accordance with Town code
- Time to complete the connection: ask the contractor if they are able to complete the disconnection of your existing system and reconnection to the sewer system in the same day.
- How the site work may affect your property during and after installation.
- Grinder pump installations:
  - Placement of the control/alarm panel is very important. The panel must be visible from the grinder pump. It is typically installed on an exterior wall, not inside the residence and between 3' to 5' above grade.
  - Ensuring that your current electrical service can accommodate the addition of a 30-amp circuit breaker for connection to the grinder pump. You may need to have your circuit breaker panel and electric service upgraded if there is not sufficient space or power capacity for a 30-amp breaker.

## Application Process

For safety reasons your old septic system must be decommissioned. This usually means pumping it out, crushing the top, and filling it with sand or bank run. The resident or their contractor would begin by obtaining a permit to decommission the existing septic system from their respective town building department. This permit number will be entered on the SCSD 1 Connection Application Form. Note that no plans by a licensed professional are required for decommissioning a septic system.

**[Official Saratoga County Connection Application Link](#)**. All residents will be required to pay any application fees required by the County Sewer District based on the type of installation to be done, i.e., gravity or low pressure (grinder pump).

[Clifton Park Permit Application Link](#) Please enter “Decommission septic system” on the project description line.

[Ballston Permit Application Link](#) Please check box for “Decommission”.

An Application for Sewer Service Connection would then be completed by each Resident or their Contractor and submitted to the Saratoga County Sewer District in order to obtain approval to connect to the system.:

## Installation

The contractor would perform the excavation, plumbing and connection to the connection point at the property line, including installation of a grinder pump if required. A third-party electrical inspection will need to be performed by a certified electrical inspector.

When the installation is complete the contractor would contact SCSD 1 to schedule the inspection of the service at least 24 hours in advance at the phone number on the application form. Contractors certified for start-up by E-One will be required to provide all testing documentation to SCSD if they fail to schedule an on-site inspection by SCSD or E-One. Failure to comply will result in a second start-up procedure required prior to connection approval.

## Decommission septic system

The disconnection must be inspected by the Town or SCSD 1. When this has been completed, contact the respective town building department where you got the permit.

It is not required to remove the septic field.

## Grinder Pump Information

The typical single-family home station is the [E/One model DH071-93](#). It requires 240v, 1 phase power, dedicated 30-amp breaker to feed it. For our project there is a 5-year parts and labor warranty.

E-One has given this project the following discount to encourage early connection:

- First Year Discount of 30% off list price
- Second Year Discount of 20% off list price
- Third Year Discount of 15% off list price
- Fourth & Fifth Year Discount of 10% off list price
- After fifth year current list prices apply

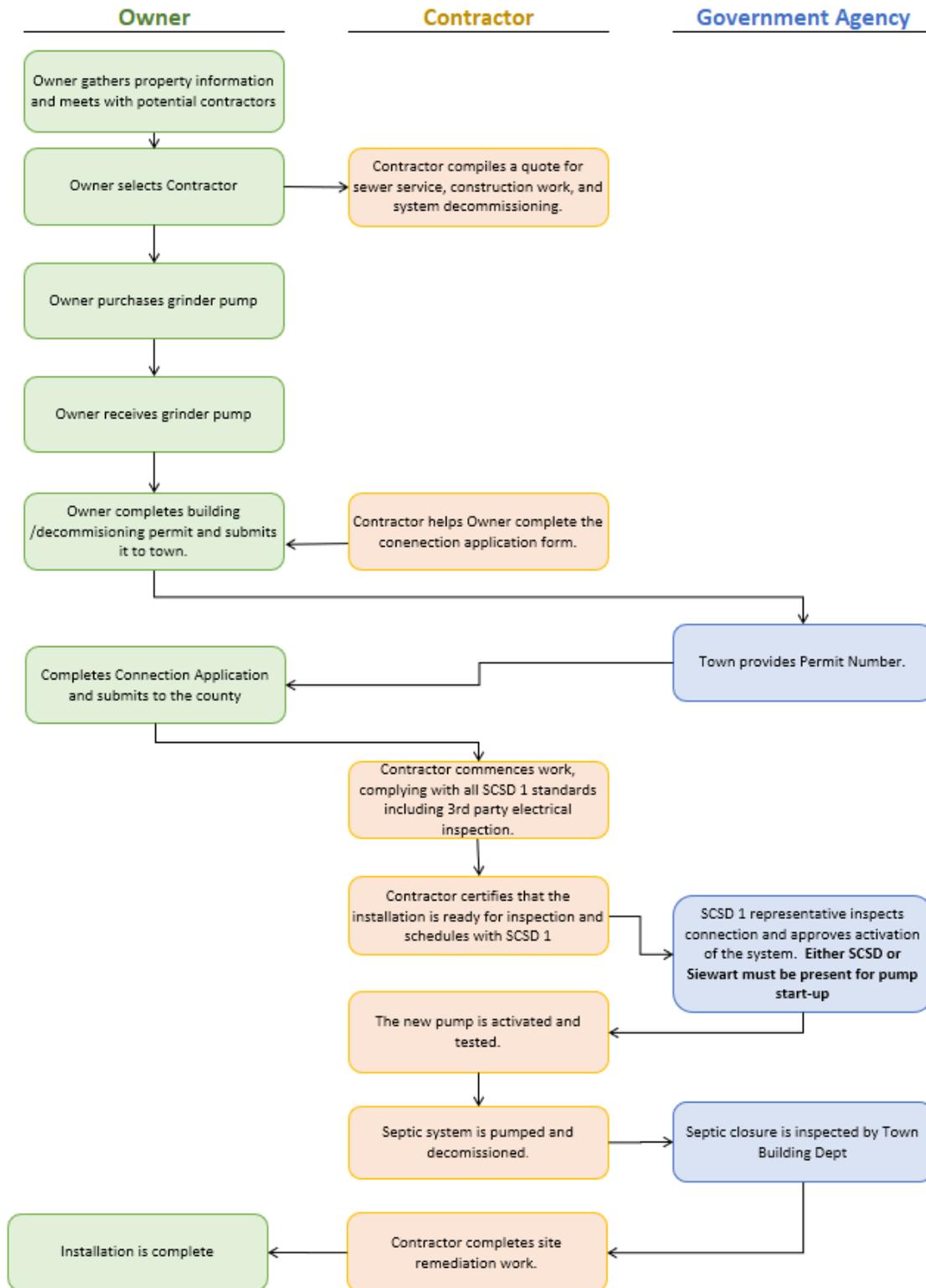
The panel for this project will be the Simplex Protect Plus Alarm Panel. For additional cost, the panel can be optionally outfitted with a connection for a portable generator for usage during a power outage

If a resident doesn't want to see the top of the unit, which must be slightly above grade, fake rocks are available from E-One. Other faux rocks can be purchased online, but residents should make sure that they are vented with a screen because proper function of the pump requires sensing of atmospheric pressure. It is also important to keep out critters. SCSD 1 allows interior pumps in situations that require them such as toilets in basements.

## Ordering a Grinder Pump

To order a grinder pump contact Siewart Equipment, 10 Corporate Circle, Albany NY 12203 at (518) 272-3431. Please reference "Ballston Lake Sewer Project" when calling.

# Sequence of Work



15-Jun-22

## Resident Checklist

The following check list contains common major tasks related to sewer service construction. Your individual sewer connection may be more or less complex and actual items may vary.

### Preliminary Steps

- Review this information manual and begin the selection process for a contractor.
- Research your existing utilities and buried structures on your property so that data can be reviewed with the contractor in designing the route of the connection.
- After obtaining contractor quotes, select a contractor for your installation.
- Work with your selected contractor to devise a sewer service layout plan suitable for your site.

### Application and Equipment Ordering

- Order a grinder pump from Siewart Equipment.
- Submit your application for permit and decommissioning to the town. The town will send you a permit number required by the county.
- Submit your Application for Connection to the county, SCSD #1 and pay the required fee.
- Resolve any discrepancies in the application, obtain application approval.

### Construction

- Contractor performs installation complying with SCSD 1 standards
- Complete the service installation including the grinder pump if required.

### Service Activation

- Have the contractor submit request for inspection to SCSD 1. Once approved, Siewart Equipment or SCSD 1 will perform the actual startup and file the report.
- Have your old septic system decommissioned per Town Code.
- Have decommissioned system inspected by the Town Building Dept

## Sewer “Do’s and Don’ts”

Do not connect roof downspouts or sump pumps

The following rules are appropriate for both gravity and low pressure (grinder pump) sewers: The only items that should be going down your drains are water, regular toilet paper, and human waste.

The following items should not be introduced into the sewer system:

- Large amounts of grease,
- Paint, strong chemicals,
- Avoid putting sand, kitty litter, etc. down your drain.
- Feminine products and personal/cleaning wipes (even if they're marked "flushable") should be disposed of in a garbage can, not flushed
- No drugs of any kind

For residents who have sink garbage disposal units, bones should not be ground up as they create sharp abrasive particles that can be harmful.

Grinder pumps are designed for a 25-year life cycle. Real world experience shows that when pumps have problems it is commonly due to owner abuse. Disposing the above materials can damage or cause premature problems (parts wearing out) with your pump or build up in the tank and block your pump from working properly.

The pump will be installed several inches above grade and the ground should be sloped away such that water does not get in. Water is fine but if it flushes dirt into the unit that could increase wear on key parts and reduce the life expectancy. Don’t cover the unit with mulch.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*ARE THERE ANY STANDARDS TO FOLLOW IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF MY SEWER SERVICE?*

Yes, specifications are provided by the Saratoga County Sewer Department and detailed on their website at [Saratoga County Specifications](#).

*WHO CAN CONSTRUCT MY SEWER SERVICE?*

Typically, residents will prefer to hire a contractor to help plan and construct the connection. Lists of contractors have been provided in this document for the convenience of residents but any contractor or resident can make the connection. However, residents should be cautioned

that all connections must be inspected by the County and conform to the County specifications.

*WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE FOR THE SERVICE CONNECTION WORK?*

It has been anticipated that the connection activity will commence some time in 2022 after the entire system is constructed and tested. Since the east side line is much shorter it is possible that it could be commissioned in the second half of 2021.

*WHAT DO I NEED TO DO WITH MY OLD SEPTIC SYSTEM?*

After connecting to the municipal sewer system, your old septic system must be decommissioned. Generally, this means that the old septic tank is pumped out, the top is crushed and then the tank is backfilled. This precludes any future safety issues.

*CAN I DISCHARGE MY SUMP PUMP OR ROOF LEADERS TO THE SEWER?*

NO, this is considered clean water and should be discharged away from the house to the ground surface or to an approved sub-surface leaching chamber. No one is allowed to discharge their sump pump flow, garage or cellar drains or downspouts to the sewer because it consumes wastewater capacity and contributes to hydraulic overloading of the wastewater treatment facilities.

*WHY DO I NEED A GRINDER PUMP?*

Several areas of the Town are serviced by what is referred to as a Low-Pressure Sewer System. These Low-Pressure Sewer Systems allow wastewater to flow uphill and over difficult terrain eliminating deep excavations through ledge which would significantly increase the cost of the system. The grinder pump grinds the solids and pumps your wastewater into this Low-Pressure Sewer System.

*HOW DO I GET A GRINDER PUMP?*

The Saratoga County Standard E/One grinder pump will be provided by Siewart Equipment who is the sole distributor in our area. Contact Siewart Equipment, located at 10 Corporate Circle, Albany, NY 12203 at (518) 272-3431. Please reference that you are part of the “Ballston Lake Sewer Project”.

*WHAT HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS SHOULDN'T I DISCHARGE TO THE SEWER?*

Very simply, only wastewater from toilets, wash sinks, showers, tubs and laundry should be discharged to the sewer. Solid food waste, chemical cleaners and disinfectant, toxic substances, painting products, feminine hygiene products, flammable materials and

pesticides/herbicides, drugs of any kind should NOT be discharged to the sewer system.

#### *WILL THE SYSTEM WORK IF THE POWER GOES OUT?*

Unless you have a backup generator the grinder pump cannot run. If the power goes out, limit your water usage as much as possible. The tank has extra storage capacity of at least a day and should be adequate because you are not using the dishwasher, washing machine, etc. When the power comes on again, the alarm may sound for a short time – this is normal because the water could be above the pump’s alarm level and the pump needs a few minutes to pump down the tank to a normal level. If the alarm does not turn off, call Siewart Equipment as detailed in a following section for service.

The main pump station will be configured with a backup generator so the gravity section of the system will remain operational.

#### *WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A BACKUP GENERATOR?*

E/One recommends a dedicated 6500-watt (min) generator with a 240 V, single phase, 30-amp breaker for starting the pump.

#### *CAN TWO NEIGHBORS COLLABORATE ON A COMMON TRENCH TO REDUCE COSTS?*

Neighbors with long runs can collaborate on a common trench. However, one neighbor’s line would then be installed on the other’s property so an easement would be required. Typically, a surveyor would define the location, an attorney would draft the document, residents would sign and have notarized, and it would be filed with the County. Although a common trench might be allowed there would have to be two physically separate lateral lines and connections. There cannot be a shared duplex grinder pump.

#### *I DON’T HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO THE SEWER CONNECTION, THERE IS A PROPERTY IN BETWEEN*

You likely have an easement to access your property through a driveway. You would need to amend the easement or get an additional one to allow the sewer to be run.

## **Grinder Pump Service**

Service for the E-One grinder pump will be provided by Siewart Equipment

Siewart Equipment provides 24/7 repair services. Standard repair rates during normal business hours (7 AM to 4 PM), Monday through Friday. Overtime, holiday and Sunday

rates are extra. Siewert Equipment's Certified Service Center is located in Albany, NY. They are equipped with E/One diagnostic equipment, grinder pump repair parts and replacement pumps. Siewert Equipment is also the authorized warranty center for E/One.

Siewert Equipment will provide both on-site and in-shop service and repair. A technician will respond to your call and diagnose the issue. The unit will be repaired in the field if possible. If it needs to be taken to the repair facility, a temporary replacement unit (loaner pump) will be installed to get the resident up and running while the unit is repaired. You will also be provided with the option for a new pump.

If your alarm goes off:

If alarm sounds, push the silence button located on the outside of the panel box (if your grinder pump is in your basement and doesn't have a separate panel box, remove the gray cover and push the silence button). Stop use of all water. Wait 15 minutes. If the alarm light stays on, call 518-272-3431 for 24/7 service.

The Town of Ballston and Clifton Park project includes a 5-year parts and labor warranty.

## Additional References

[E-One Grinder Pump Owner's Guide Link](#)

[Saratoga County Sewer Use Ordinance Link](#)

[Sewer Website Link](#)

[Town of Ballston Sewer Use Law Link](#)

Clifton Park Building Department (518) 371-6702

Ballston Building Department (518) 490-2740

Adirondack Engineering (518) 250-1932

