

Council takes step to repair city sewer

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Friday, 26 November 2010 14:55 -

Camera to peek at problems inside lines

Local council members will take a more conservative approach to improving the city sewer.

Because of complaints from residents about sewage problems after heavy flooding last June, the council has been considering both short- intermediate- and long-term solutions.

At their Nov. 16 meeting, Gothenburg's council decided to spend an estimated \$46,500 to film the inside of sewer mains in known problem areas.

"It's a good first step," said city administrator Bruce Clymer.

A sewer study committee, including Mayor Joyce Hudson, city administrator Bruce Clymer, city services director Shane Gruber, council members Jim Aden and Tim Strauser and J Buddenberg, recommended the plan.

Buddenberg has experienced problems with sewage in his basement following several heavy rains.

Council members decided to spend the \$46,500 which was part of a \$1,125,400 plan designed by city engineer Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers of Kearney.

The rest of the cost has to do with fixing the problem.

Miller & Associates also came up with a \$1.8 million proposal that involves redoing a main sewer line under the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

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The less expensive alternative, Clymer said, is televising mains where problems with water infiltration and broken sewer have been reported.

The cost is \$1.55 per lineal foot for 30,000 feet of line.

To pay for the work decided upon, the council discussed raising residents' sewer rates.

Clymer suggested dividing the cost of \$46,500 by 1,516 customers, who use the sewer, which equals about \$2.56 per month if paid in one year.

The amount charged to residents would be less if paid for over a longer period of time.

However when and how that will be done will be decided at another meeting.

Clymer said the filming would be done in March with Miller & Associates putting together a package for companies wanting to bid on the project.

He noted that some of the work would be done by city crews and that filming would be done around 2 a.m. when flows are smaller through sewer lines.

When asked if there was money in the budget for the project, Clymer said "no."

Council members decided to get the project done instead of waiting to request it in the 2011-12 budget.

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“We’ve talked about it for a year and this is one way to find out where the infiltration is,” said council member Jim Aden. “It’s money spent

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