



GRATTAN TOWNSHIP

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COWAN LAKE SEWER PROJECT UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

During a recent meeting with the Cowan Lake Sewer Committee, I was asked to compose a letter to the Cowan Lake residents and give them an update on the status of the project. I was also asked to base the letter on questions posed by this committee at the September meeting.

As most of you have probably heard, the Cowan Lake Sewer project is about three months behind the original schedule as you read this. We and our engineers are still struggling to get information from the Kent County Health Department and permits from EGLE. Our engineers have recommended and the Board has approved that we delay the start of the project until spring of 2020 due to the difficulty with working in the winter months and the restraints placed on us by the road commission due to plowing the winter roads.

I will state the questions posed to me by the Cowan Lake Sewer Committee, one by one, with my response following and I believe most of the questions should be answered. If not, please feel free to call me and get information first-hand.

1. **What should we expect to see on our 2019 winter taxes?:** The assessment dollars appearing on your winter tax bill will be the same as last year.
2. **Are we in danger of losing the grant?:** The construction period for this job is eight months so if started in the spring (probably March or April) there will be ample time to complete the project before the end of the year.
3. **Why has the project slowed down?:** In order for this project or any other project that requires the cooperation of the state and county to go smoothly and in a timely manner everyone has to cooperate and this has not happened.
4. **When will the tax assessment be adjusted to reflect the benefit of the grant?:** This timing is a little unsure but it is our understanding that the bids for the project have to be submitted (around the end of 2019) which will allow for the bonds to be issued and then we will know the actual cost of the project. This process is in the hands of the attorneys and the Municipal Advisor who handles the bond sales.
5. **Will permits be required for the plumbing connection between the house drain and the grinder housing?** Based on my discussion with our Plumbing Inspector, this work is not covered under the State Building Code and consequently will not require a permit. It will however require an inspection by the Township's sewer maintenance people before back-filling and the one performing this work will be responsible for calling for an inspection at least 24 hours before needed.

September 26, 2019

6. **Will drain fields interfere with installation of the grinder pump chamber or lateral?**
When the pipe installer installs the pipe, it will be by directional drilling. This method will allow the new pipe to be installed at depth of 5' and the drain fields should be only 24-36 inches deep. However, depending on the location of the other septic and grinder station components, the new pipe installation may interfere with a few of them as the new pipe exits the ground during the installation process. But in general, they will not conflict.
7. **Can home owners install their own electrical equipment needed for the grinder station control panel?** Any qualified individual can install the electrical equipment for the grinder pump but an electrical permit will be required and the work will have to satisfy State Code requirements.
8. **Can home owners install their own connection between the house drain and the grinder station stub?** Yes, but here again there are certain standards that have to be observed and the work will have to be inspected by the Township's sewer maintenance people before back filling. See #5.
9. **Can the water softener drain be hooked up to the old drain field?** Yes and this is recommended since the softener cannot be hooked into the new sanitary sewer nor can any other drains, i.e. sump pumps, foundation drains, eave trough drains, etc. Your home may be checked for any illegal hook-ups during installation of the system. There are other methods of draining the softener and other drains which are described in the Water Softener Ordinance No. 2011-003 of the Township's Regulatory Ordinance found online.

Also enclosed with this letter is a directive from the Kent County Health Department with precise instructions on how to go about abandoning your septic system.

Disclaimer: This is not intended to be a legal document and certain facets of this information could change during the duration of the project.

Sincerely,

Frank Force
Grattan Township Sewer Administrator