

**Claim to the City of Somerville
for repairs to a residential sewer line blocked by a city sub-contractor.**

Homeowner:

John Glyphis/Gillian Puttick
22 Elmwood Street
Somerville, MA 02144
Ph 617-797-5858

Date of Incident:

March 8, 2021

Location:

The residential sewer line running under the utility pole outside the entrance to 22 Elmwood Street and the main sewer in the mid line of Elmwood Street. The location of the damaged pipe is marked by a rectangular repair to the asphalt that crosses a trench to 17 Elmwood across the street dug by Eversource in November 2020 (Attachment 11). This newer sewer line repair (rectangular asphalt shape (5 ft x 13 ft) is 8 ft from the utility pole, and approx. 30" below the surface of the street.

Description of Defect:

A subcontractor to the city, National Watermain, was contracted to re-sleeve the main 24" waste water/sewage pipe in the middle of Elmwood Street. In the process of re-sleeving, the opening of the 6" residential sewer pipe from 22 Elmwood was not cut open.

Detailed Statement of Facts:

- 1) The residential sewer line backed up into the basement of 22 Elmwood Street the morning of 24 May, 2021. The homeowner, John Glyphis, called Somerville DPW to report a problem (logged as 1013945). A city official at DPW recommended that the home owner contract a drain cleaner plumbing contractor to snake the residential line to check if that was blocked. Drains by James had a workman stop by later the same day (24 May) to snake the line (See Attachment 1). As indicated in the report, there was no blockage in the residential line until approximately 40 feet into the street where there was a very solid blockage. They recommended a camera examination and GPS location to examine the interior condition of the pipe and to determine the exact location of the line and the blockage.
- 2) Drains by James returned 2 days later with the necessary camera equipment to do this examination and to determine the blockage location using GPS (Attachment 2). This examination confirmed a solid blockage at 40 feet from the cleanout in the basement of 22 Elmwood. This exact location was marked in the street (See Attachment 4)).
- 3) With a steam inspection, DPW confirmed that the 24" pipe was not blocked. They recommended that the homeowner contract a sewer and drain contractor licensed by the city to excavate, investigate, and repair the blocked 6" sewer line.

- 4) From a list provided by the Clerk's Office, the homeowner contracted Borges Sewer and Drain to undertake this repair. Borges applied for the necessary emergency permit from the city to do the work on June 8, 2021 and this was granted the same day.
- 5) Borges commenced work on Wednesday, 9 June 2021. With a relatively shallow excavation (approx. 30 – 36 inches deep), the electrical connection between the utility pole and 17 Elmwood was uncovered, and about 12" lower and parallel to this was the 6" clay pipe sewer line feeding to the 24" main line in the middle of Elmwood street. As soon as the dirt substrate was removed with hand shoveling, the residential sewer line was visibly broken from the main line at the junction (Attachment 5). In this photo, sewage effluent can be seen running from the cracked pipe into the open excavation hole.
- 6) Borges removed the broken pipe from the junction with the main. They installed a PVC replacement section of approx. 4 feet and cemented the end into the main 24" pipe (Attachments 8 and 9).
- 7) In attempting to attach the new PVC section into the mainline they then discovered that the sleeve material installed in March 2021 had completely covered the opening for the residential pipe, having never been cut out by National Watermain. It was necessary to remove a 6" round section of this sleeve to seat the replacement PVC. This sleeve disc is shown in Attachment 10.
- 8) The excavation and the repair were inspected by Karla Cuarezma (Kcuarezma@somervillema.gov). Ms. Cuarezma had a discussion with the contractor about the pipe break and repair and she made notes. At her request, the homeowner later forwarded the photos of the work and the pipes to her – some of these same photos are provided in the attachments.

Remedy:

We wish to be reimbursed the full cost of the examination of the blocked sewer pipe and the full cost of the excavation and repair in the street.

Initial pipe snake (Drains by James: 5/24/2021) (Attachment 1)	\$329
Camera inspection and GPS (Drains by James: 5/26/2021) (Attachment 2)	\$200
Excavation/pipe repair (Borges Sewer and Drain: 6/9/2021) (Attachment 3)	\$6800
Total cost	\$7329

Attachments:

1 – 11 On following pages.

Snake report 24 May 2021 after sewage line back up.

Text above:

“Powersnake main line from clean out in basement numerous times. Snake getting stuck at Approx 40’ could not get through

Possible collapsed line at the city connection

Need to call city in morning”

Camera report 26 May 2021 of sewer line

Text above:

“Camera inspect to locate main sewer line.

Camera stopped at 40' Could not get a picture line underwater

Located line at 40' where recent electrical work was done approx. 4 1/2 ' deep

Rest of line clear up to 40' "

Attachment 3 – Estimate and Proof of payment from Borges Sewer and Drain

Estimate from Borges Sewer and Drain



Borges Sewer & Drain LLC
5 OAK ST
WILMINGTON, MA 01887 US
(617) 293-4902
stevenborges85@gmail.com

Estimate 1324

ADDRESS

John Glyphis
22 Elmwood St
Somerville, MA 02145 US

DATE
06/07/2021

TOTAL
\$6,800.00

EXPIRATION
DATE
09/07/2021

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
	Excavation work	Saw cut asphalt in street to excavate trench to replace section of broken 6" clay pipe with new 6" PVC pipe. During excavation we will try and determine if any damage was done to sewer line from recent electrical work in street. We will also inspect remainder of line going back to house to ensure condition of pipe. Total amount of pipe to be replaced approximately 5ft to 8ft. Back fill trench, dispose all dirt, rocks, and waste, restore all working areas including paving trench in street. Clean up work site. Labor, Materials, Permit Fees, Police Detail:\$6,800.00	6,800.00

Half of total amount is due prior to work being started.
Remaining balance is due upon completion of work.

TOTAL	\$6,800.00
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THANK YOU.

Accepted By

Accepted Date

Proof of payment for excavation and repair by Borges Sewer and Drain



Borges Sewer & Drain LLC
5 OAK ST
WILMINGTON, MA 01887 US
(617) 293-4902
stevenborges85@gmail.com

Invoice 1210

BILL TO

John Glyphis
22 Elmwood St
Somerville, MA 02145 US

DATE
06/10/2021

PLEASE PAY
\$0.00

DUE DATE
06/10/2021

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
	Excavation work	Saw cut asphalt in street to excavate trench to replace section of broken 6" clay pipe with new 6" PVC pipe. During excavation we will try and determine if any damage was done to sewer line from recent electrical work in street. We will also inspect remainder of line going back to house to ensure condition of pipe. Total amount of pipe to be replaced approximately 5ft to 8ft. Back fill trench, dispose all dirt, rocks, and waste, restore all working areas including paving trench in street. Clean up work site. Labor, Materials, Permit Fees, Police Detail:\$6,800.00	6,800.00
		PAYMENT	6,800.00
		TOTAL DUE	\$0.00

THANK YOU.

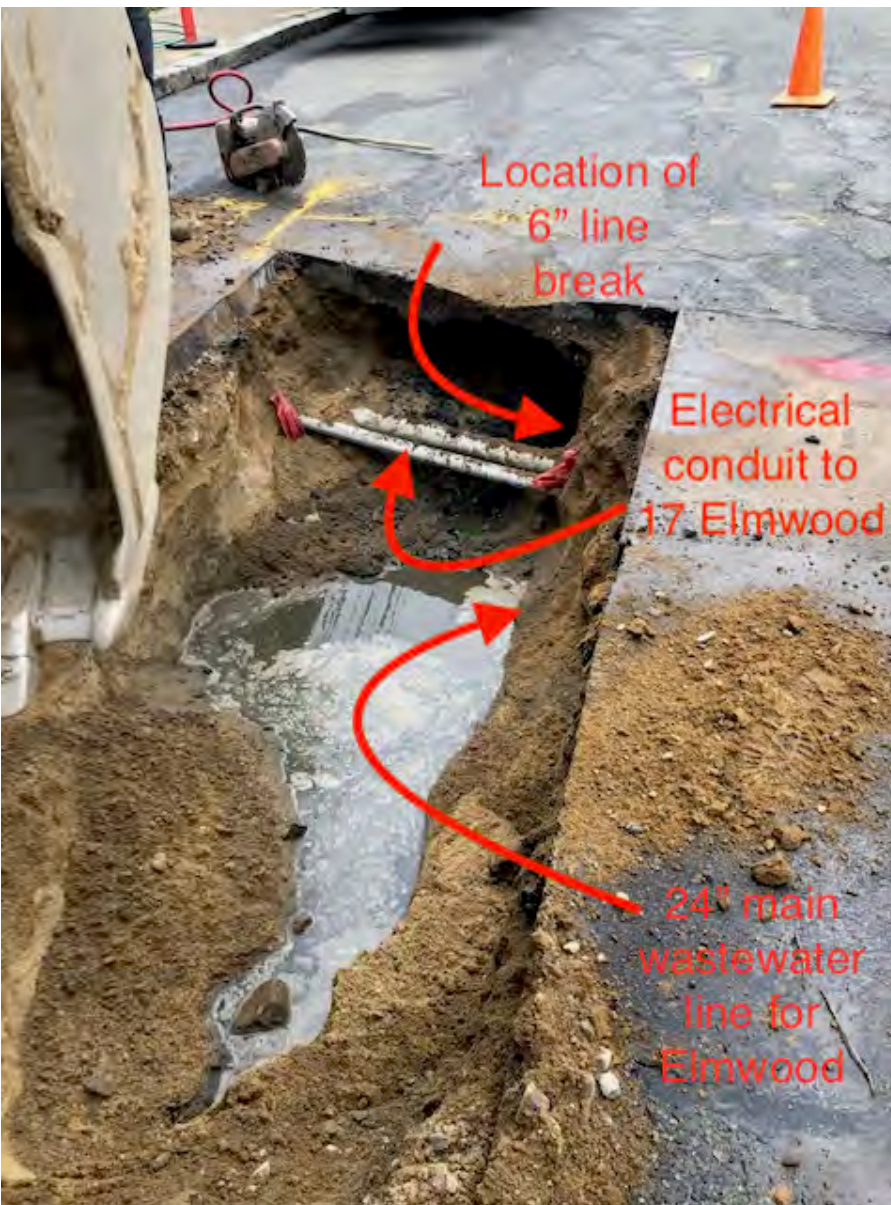
Attachment 4

Location of the sewer line blockage marked (red circle with cross) in the middle of Elmwood St after the camera and GPS inspection (26 May 2021).



Attachment 5

First photo of broken 6" sewer pipe in relation to 24" main street pipe. The new electrical connections are also shown running from the utility pole (not visible in the left side of photo) across the street to 17 Elmwood. The visible waste water drained out of the 6" residential line as soon as that was exposed by hand shovel digging.



Attachment 6a

Photo showing the broken 6" sewer pipe at 28" below the asphalt surface and less than 12" from the location of the electrical connections to 17 Elmwood.



Attachment 6b

Enlarged view of photo in 6a above to show the tape measurement of break in pipe at 28" below the asphalt surface.



Attachment 7

Close up view of break in 6" sewer pipe to show proximity of less than 12" below electrical connection as shown by tape measure. The main 24" sewer line is buried an inch below the sandy colored dirt in the lower part of the photo.



Attachment 8

Photo showing the location of a 6" PVC repair pipe (turquoise) into the main 24" line.



Attachment 9

A different view of the 6" PVC pipe repair mortared into the main 24" line.



Attachment 10

Photo of the sleeve disc that had to be removed to enable a re-connection of the 6" pipe with the 24" pipe. During the re-sleeving in early March 2021 of the 24" pipe this disc should have been cut out internally by the contractors installing the sleeve in the 24" pipe.



Attachment 11

Photo showing the location of the completed excavation for the 6" pipe repair relative to the electrical connection completed by Eversource for 17 Elmwood in November 2020.

