

## Information Bulletin

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# Underground plumbing for housing accessory structures or fixtures

Water supply and drainage piping for housing accessory structures or exterior fixtures for seasonal use may be installed in various configurations. The method in which these services are provided will determine the type of permit required and under which City Department's jurisdiction the work falls.

## Inspections

As the water utility for the City of Winnipeg, the Water and Waste Department has historically been responsible for performing inspections for the installation of all exterior plumbing pipes to within one metre of a structure.

Effective immediately, when owners wish to provide water and drain connections from the main dwelling to an accessory structure or exterior fixture for seasonal use on their property (Figure 1), this type of configuration is under the authority of the Planning, Property and Development Department, Housing Inspections Branch, and must comply with the Manitoba Plumbing Code (MPC).

## Water and Waste Department (WWD) jurisdiction

Connections from accessory structures/fixtures directly to the existing sewer or water service pipe for the property (Figure 2) or tied directly to the City water mains (Figure 3) are under the authority of WWD and must comply with the [Sewer By-law](#). A Service Permit from WWD is required. For inquiries or to request an inspection from WWD, call 311 or use the [311 online form](#). Plumbing permits from the Planning, Property & Development Department are still required for any internal plumbing for the structures.

## Water meter

If an additional water meter is required for the accessory structure (i.e.: multiple metering), contact [watermeter@winnipeg.ca](mailto:watermeter@winnipeg.ca). This separate water meter will need to be authorized by WWD. Refer to City of Winnipeg Standard Construction Specification [SD-027A, Water meter installation details - 20 mm domestic service](#).

## Planning, Property and Development Department (PPD) jurisdiction

Where the piping between the main dwelling and an accessory structure/fixture are a continuation, extension and/or alteration of the main dwelling plumbing system (Figure 1), the drainage pipe serving the accessory structure/fixture on the exterior is always defined as a branch drain and not a building sewer. With this configuration, the pipe installed between buildings will drain into the building drain of the main dwelling and not directly into a building sewer.

Underground plumbing drains and water system extensions that are installed between the distribution side of the main dwelling water meter and the accessory structure or fixture are considered branch lines (Figure 1). This piping falls under the requirements of the MPC and the jurisdiction of the PPD Housing Inspections Branch. A plumbing permit from PPD is required (apply through [Permits Online](#)) and when scheduled, PPD will perform inspections of this piping in addition to the internal piping of the accessory structure/fixture.

The Housing Inspections Branch inspects this branch drain as well as the water supply line prior to it being covered to ensure proper depth, grading and insulation is provided.

### Definitions from the Manitoba Plumbing Code:

**Building sewer** means a pipe that is connected to a *building drain* 1 m outside a wall of a *building* and that leads to a public sewer or *private sewage disposal system*.

**Building drain** means the lowest horizontal piping, including any vertical *offset*, that conducts *sewage*, *clear-water waste* or *storm water* by gravity to a *building sewer*.

**Branch** means a *sanitary drainage pipe* connected at its upstream end to the junction of 2 or more *sanitary drainage pipes* or to a *stack*, and connected at its downstream end to another *branch*, a *sump*, a *stack* or a *building drain*.

**Plumbing system** means a *drainage system*, a *venting system* and a *water system* or parts thereof.

## Burial depth requirements

Burial depth of the branch drain shall be 2.3 to 2.75 metres (7.5 to 9 feet) deep where possible, with the sewer pipe buried deeper than the water pipe.

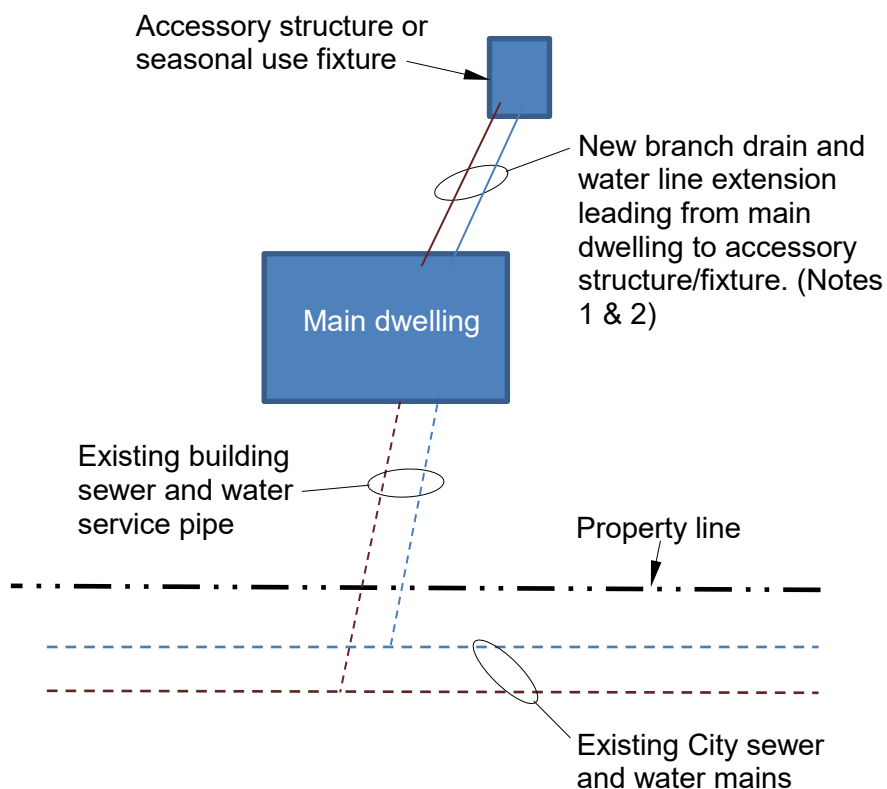
### Reduction of burial depth

Shallower burial depths for branch drains may be permitted; however, it is the responsibility of the installer and the property owner to ensure the system is adequately protected from the effects of freezing. A drawing signed and sealed by a professional engineer, licensed to practice in the Province of Manitoba and skilled in the area of work, must be submitted. The drawing must include insulation details for the protection of the piping.

## Installation Configurations

The plumbing pipes to the accessory structure/fixture in Figure 1 are considered branch piping and are under the jurisdiction of the PPD Housing Inspections Branch.

**Figure 1**  
**Accessory structure/fixture plumbing connected to main dwelling**

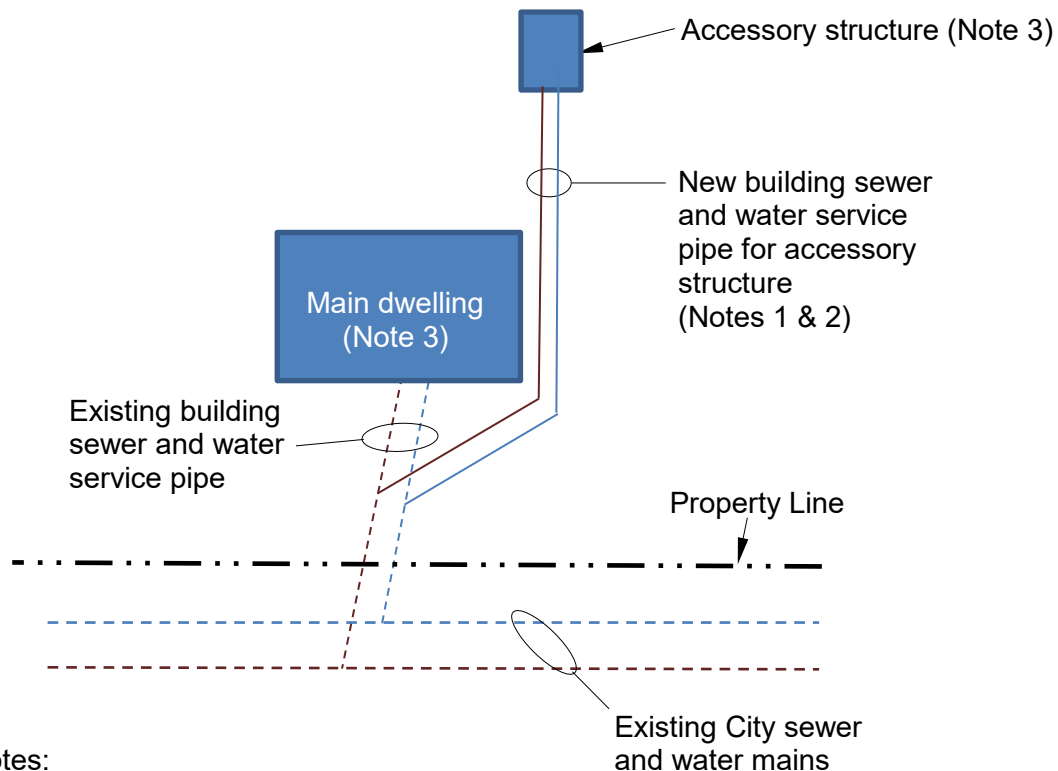


Notes:

1. Plumbing permits and inspections required through PPD.
2. If a separate water meter is required for the accessory structure, contact [watermeter@winnipeg.ca](mailto:watermeter@winnipeg.ca).

The plumbing pipes to the accessory structures/fixtures in Figures 2 & 3 are not considered branch piping and are under the jurisdiction of WWD.

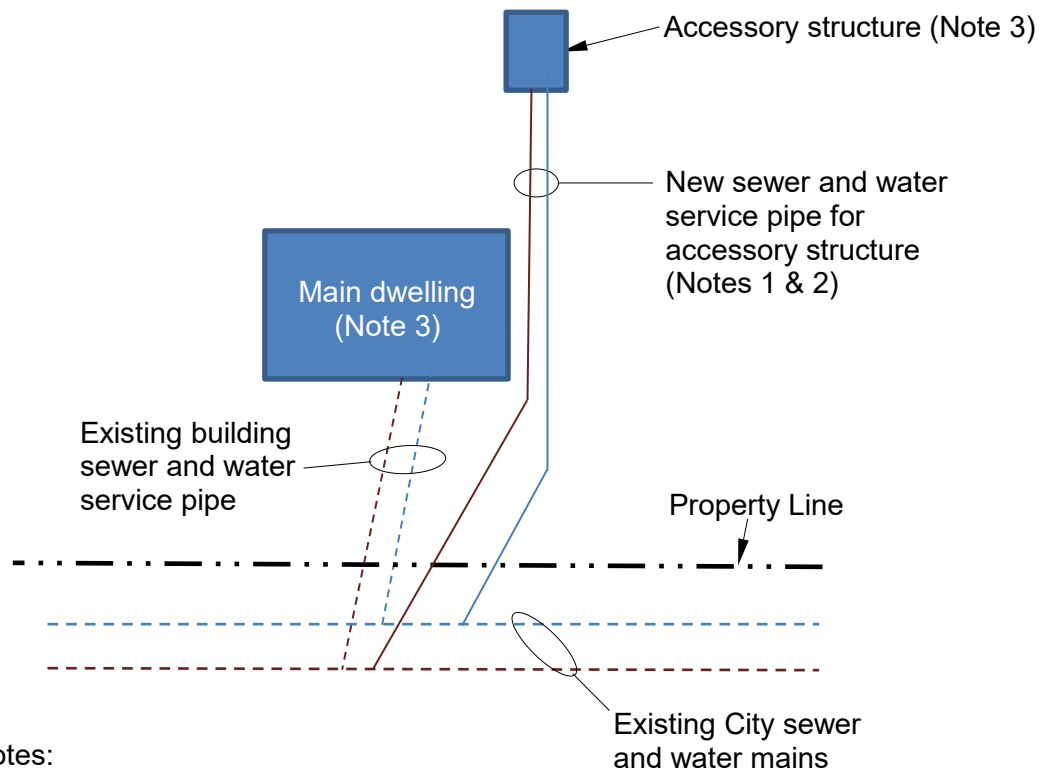
**Figure 2**  
**Accessory structure plumbing connected to existing building sewer and water service pipe**



Notes:

1. Service permit and inspection required through WWD for the new sewer and water service pipe to the accessory structure.
2. A separate water meter is required for the accessory structure; contact [watermeter@winnipeg.ca](mailto:watermeter@winnipeg.ca).
3. Plumbing permit(s) required through PPD for any additional plumbing for interior of building(s).

**Figure 3**  
**Accessory structure plumbing connected directly to City mains**



Notes:

1. Service permit and inspection required through WWD for the new sewer and water service pipe to accessory structure.
2. A separate water meter is required for the accessory structure; contact [watermeter@winnipeg.ca](mailto:watermeter@winnipeg.ca).
3. Plumbing permits required through PPD for any additional plumbing for interior of building(s).