



Sewer Line Being Cross Bored

When a new natural gas service line is connected to a home, trenchless technology (also called a directional bore) is often used to reduce potential damage to driveways, sidewalks, and landscaping.

Prior to installation, your natural gas utility will contact 811 to locate existing lines that may intersect with the direction of the upcoming bore. Care will be taken to see that the new natural gas line does not damage current infrastructure. Unfortunately, with the directional drill work being done underground, your utility (or their contractor) may not be aware of a sewer line.

If you do experience a sewer backup after a new gas service line has been installed, contact 811 before having a plumber attempt to clear your sewer line that may have been “cross bored” (i.e., the gas line driven through the sewer line).with any mechanical equipment. Also, inspect the area for trees or landscaping that could be causing the restriction. If there are concerns about a potential cross bore, an in-line camera inspection would be in order.

If a plumber does attempt to mechanically cut through the blockage without taking these measures, the gas line could be unintentionally hit. As a result, leaking gas could enter the sewer system, creating a safety risk. Instead, ask the plumber to use a snake or water jet when attempting to clear the blockage. He/she should be on the lookout for obstructions that do not resemble roots or other common items.

When a mechanical cleaning device is used, have the plumber check for yellow, orange, or black plastic cuttings. Another indication of a gas leaking into the sewer system to watch for is the presence of bubbles either in the sink drains or the toilet.