

Sewers 7/09

There is a story in here about sewers, but it is really about the sewer clean out that should be visible in front of your house. Mike Ortenzo of 21 Round Valley Lane was away in Florida for a longer period than he expected because his wife Marilyn, became ill while there. Once at home he found that after flushing either of his two toilets the water would come up and out of his shower drains. Well if it goes down the toilet and up the shower then you know two things, your toilets aren't blocked and your main line is. Mike called me and I told him he needed a good plumber and that I thought it was unusual for the pipe to be blocked because we have PVC (plastic) pipe that is very smooth on the inside and has glued joints that are watertight. Most of us remember in our old homes that we had clay or cast iron pipe with caulked joints every 10 feet. The joints always allowed a little seepage and the roots of trees would always find their way in and clog or break the pipe. Thus, the Rotor Rooter man. Mike called a local guy, a MR Rooter and he came as promised the next morning. Now the problems started. He concurred the toilets weren't the problem but to avoid removing them to get to the problem he needed access to the sewer clean out. He spent an hour looking while Mike went around his neighbors homes to see where they were on other houses. He didn't see any on their properties



either. The plumber started digging up the planter patch in front of Mike's house and after awhile he located it under the mulch and dirt one and a half feet down. Once he uncovered it he sent a camera down and found the problem right away. It was eight

feet down where the cleanout and the main line connected. Now he had to bring in a backhoe and dig down after pulling out shrubs, trees and brickwork. The wye fitting where the clean-out attached to the main line had cracked at some time and the tree roots from his front planter bed had entered the crack and filled the pipe. The pipe was either not set in right originally or was moved, shifted or pushed down when he had his landscaping done. Mike had landscapers build up a foot and a half high decorative brick wall at his front



How clean-out should look

planter bed and they then filled it with dirt, plants and mulch, covering his cleanout. This cost Mike at least an hour extra on his \$2600 bill. The plumber had to get a backhoe, break up the brick wall, remove trees and

shrubs and dig down eight feet, change out the fittings and replace the dirt. Now Mike has to get in a landscaper to replace all the shrubs and brickwork. The plumber raised the clean-out high enough so it wouldn't be hidden again. Look for yours and see that it is either uncovered or raised so it can be found quickly in case of an emergency. Also, try to keep your landscaper away from the clean-out or at least aware of its importance so they don't disturb it.

This and previous around the house articles can be retrieved on the web at

<http://www.aaazzz.net/id5.html>