

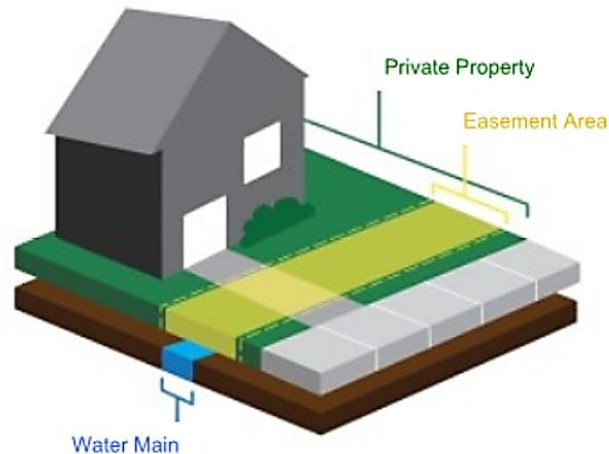


Water and Sewer Easements – Frequently Asked Questions Olympic Valley Public Service District



What is an easement?

An easement is a legal right to use another person's land for a specific purpose. District owned water and sewer infrastructure that runs underground through private property is placed within easements to ensure District personnel can access the infrastructure to complete maintenance, repair, and replacement activities. The easements are attached to the property deed and pass on to the next property owner when the property is sold or transferred.



Why does OVPSD need easements?

The District owns and maintains more than 45 miles of underground water and sewer infrastructure that weaves through public roadways and private property. For the District to provide quality services and ensure the health and safety of our customers and the environment, it is imperative that this infrastructure be well maintained. Infrastructure is placed within easements to assure that the District has the legal authority to access infrastructure located on private property for routine maintenance and during water or sewer emergencies. Additionally, easements restrict building in that part of the property to prevent damage to infrastructure and ensure District access.

What is restricted in a water or sewer easement?

To allow for access to water and sewer infrastructure for operation and maintenance activities, the District does not permit the installation of any objects (sheds, fences, landscaping, irrigation systems, structures, boulders, fill, etc.) within water and sewer easements. Trees and shrubs planted within water and sewer easements can develop deep and extensive root systems that may grow into water and sewer pipes in search of water. Root intrusion into pipe systems can cause leaks and sewer backups that could result in a sewer spill on or near your property. Per District Administrative Code Section 3.12, any such obstruction shall be removed by the property owner at their own cost.

What if my property has existing improvements that encroach on the easement area?

The District works hard to be proactive in maintaining our easements and understands that each encroachment is unique. These encroachments are handled on a case-by-case basis in which the District will work with the property owner to determine the most appropriate way to handle pre-existing obstructions located within an easement. District Administrative Code Section 3.12 grants the District the authority to remove any obstruction(s) at the cost of the property owner, however, the District will make every effort to work with the property owner before exercising this authority.

What should I do if I am planning a project that may impact the easement area or if I have any questions about easements on my property?

If you are planning on landscaping or building any small structures on your property, please contact the District beforehand so that we may review your plans and mark up the location of water and sewer infrastructure and easements. District review of plans is required by District Code and early review will help speed up the permitting process and avoid easement encroachment issues. Please refer to our website (ovpsd.org) for more information on the plan review process and contact our engineering department at (530) 583-4692 ext. 210 if you have any questions about easements potentially located on your property. We appreciate your patience and understanding and look forward to working with you to maintain the pristine mountain environment we call home.