



LOCAL/REGIONAL

Sewer line warranty to now be available

By Ken Stephens - The Hutchinson News - kstephens@hutchnews.com

Published: 5/16/2012 7:52 PM | Last update: 5/16/2012 7:52 PM

Hutchinson residents will see an offer to purchase a warranty to cover repairs to their sewer service lines in their mailboxes within the next week.

The program, approved by the City Council last October and provided through the National League of Cities and Service Line Warranties of America, is being rolled out in 40-50 new cities in the next few days and will be followed by a similar warranty program to cover water lines, most likely in October, according to Brian Davis, SLW's general manager for the western United States region.

Under terms of the sewer line warranty, Hutchinson residents can purchase protection for \$5 a month that will cover up to \$4,000 for the cost of repairing a sewer line between the house and the main sewer line and an additional \$4,000 to cover the cost of cutting up and repairing the street if necessary.

That should cover most problems. The city's Building Inspection Department said last October that it issued 62 permits for sewer line repairs or replacements in 2010, with an average cost of \$1,300.

If a resident who has subscribed to the warranty program has a problem, they will be able to contact Service Line Warranties by telephone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The company will then arrange for a local, licensed plumbing contractor to call the homeowner within 60 minutes. If homeowners have a preferred contractor who has been approved by the program, they can designate that they want the work done by that contractor. Repairs are to be made within 24 hours. The plumbing contractor will then be paid directly by Service Line Warranties, up to the limits of the coverage.

Information about the program, including how to sign up, will arrive in the mail within the next week on City of Hutchinson stationery, said Director of Public Works Reg Jones.

The program, which is also being introduced at this time in El Dorado, Dodge City and Ottawa, costs the city nothing and is completely funded by the monthly premiums paid by homeowners who voluntarily choose to purchase the warranty.

The monthly premium will be 50 cents less than Service Line Warranties originally projected because the City Council waived a 10 percent commission that the company had offered to pay to the city.

Including the new cities, the program is now offered in 125 cities across the country.