



Edgewood entering into sewer line repair program

Written by Cindy Schroeder

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EDGEWOOD - City leaders say Edgewood will soon become one of the first cities in the area to get insurance protection for broken or malfunctioning sewer lines through the National League of Cities.

Information on the NLC Service Line Warranty Program will be included in Edgewood's newsletter that residents should receive early next week, city officials say.

"We'll probably have the program within the next 30 to 40 days," said Edgewood Mayor John Link.

The National League of Cities' website says the NLC Service Line Warranty Program administered by Utility Service Partners Inc. protects residents who haven't set aside money for a costly, unexpected repair of utility lines.

Repairs are performed by licensed local plumbers, who call the customer within one hour of their making a claim, the National League of Cities' website says. The work is typically performed within 24 hours, and policy holders can call a Utility Service Partners' hot line for help around the clock.

Link said Edgewood will offer insurance protection for sewer lines at a cost of \$4.25 per month. That could include lines that are broken, clogged or backed up.

Residents can cancel the program at any time, he said.

Link said Edgewood officials looked into the program as a way to save residents money, not because of any particular problems with sewer lines in the city.

"We basically saw this as a savings for our residents in these hard economic times, when a lot of people don't have excess cash," Link said.

The National League of Cities' website says the average cost of repairing a broken sewer line can range from \$1,200 to more than \$3,500. Although homeowner insurance policies may pay to repair damage created by failed utility lines, they generally don't cover the repair of broken lines or pipes, the NLC website says.

Although cities must endorse Utility Service Partners as the service provider for the service line warranty program before residents can enroll, there is no cost or obligation on the city's part, Link said.

Feedback from officials in other states that have used the NLC Service Line Warranty program has been positive, Edgewood City Administrator Doug Beckham told city council Monday.

The program would be similar to the National League of Cities' prescription drug card program that Edgewood and a number of other local governments now offer, Link said.

From March 2009 to February of this year, Edgewood residents have saved more than \$33,539 through the prescription drug card program, according to city records.

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