

The Commercial Inspector

A Monthly Newsletter From Global Property Inspections

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 5

ask the inspector

Q. Obviously my inspector will check the plumbing fixtures, drain and water supply lines in the building I'm considering for purchase. Can the condition of the sewer lines be checked?

A. Although not part of a typical commercial property inspection, for an additional fee, sewer drain lines can be scoped with a camera specially designed to video 2-inch to 36-inch diameter drain lines. A high-resolution, waterproof video camera mounted on the tip of a flexible rod is used to navigate the bends of a sewer line. Real-time video image transmission allows the technician to see the condition of the inside of the pipe and to determine whether there are potential or existing problems. Images can usually be captured to create a permanent record of the findings.



Video inspection in pipelines can help identify some of the following issues:

- » Cracked lateral sewer line
- » Separated lateral sewer line joint

snapshots from the field

What Is This Photo?



- A) Determining asphalt depth
- B) Fishing in the parking lot
- C) Cleaning a grease trap.
- D) Sewer camera in action

(answer on the back)

- » Debris blockage of the sewer line
- » Bellied lateral sewer line (allows water to sit in the line)
- » Root intrusion of the sewer line
- » Deteriorated piping materials of an older sewer line

Many inspectors and technicians who offer this service also can determine the location and the depth of the drain lines. This can be especially helpful in planning a remodel of the interior space, for the addition or repositioning of the plumbing fixtures, taking some of the guesswork out of the construction process.

Prior to purchasing or entering into certain leases, you may want to consider having a sewer scan completed on the main drain lines of the building or tenant space.

for your information

Improve the Look of Your Building With Landscaping

Use landscaping to add beauty and appeal to your commercial building. Here are a few easy tips for landscape design:

- » Go for a low-maintenance landscape design to avoid costly ongoing maintenance.
- » Use landscaping to make the building's entrance obvious.
- » Try to make the landscaping an extension of your building's architecture and geometry.

maintenance matters

It's Time to Service Your Building's HVAC System to Prepare for Summer

May is an ideal time to perform preventive maintenance on your commercial building's HVAC system. Regular maintenance in the spring and fall help ensure trouble-free operation, energy efficiency and peak performance. Servicing your HVAC system now can also help you avoid a system failure during the hot summer months.

Here's a maintenance checklist for both outdoor and indoor units. If you are not qualified to perform the maintenance yourself, be sure that the company you hire adheres to these lists.

Outdoor Units

- » Check for proper refrigerant level and adjust if necessary
- » Clean dirt, leaves and debris from inside cabinet
- » Inspect base pan for restricted drain openings — remove any obstructions

- » Inspect and clean coil and cabinet
- » Inspect fan motor and fan blades for wear and damage; lubricate if needed



- » Inspect control box, associated controls/accessories, wiring and connections.
- » Inspect compressor and associated tubing for damage

Indoor Units

- » Inspect and clean blower assembly (includes blower housing, blower wheel and motor)
- » Lubricate motor if needed and inspect and replace fan belt if needed
- » Check combustion blower housing for lint and debris and clean
- » Inspect and clean evaporator coil, drain pan and condensate drain lines
- » Gas furnaces: Inspect for gas leaks
- » Inspect, clean and adjust ignition system and safety controls

- » Inspect heat exchanger or heating elements
- » Clean or replace air filters

did you know?

Improve Your Building's Energy Efficiency by Planting Trees



Deciduous trees are the most effective at reducing energy costs. When planted around a commercial building, deciduous trees provide excellent protection from the summer sun but allow winter sunlight to reach and warm the building's interior. Before planting consider the height, growth rate, branch spread and shape and select those appropriate for your building and its lot.

Snapshots from the field

The correct answer is D. This is a sewer camera in action.