



Jenkintown Real Estate News

Special Edition #1

Your Money Down the Drain

Jenkintown Realtors Challenge Need For Home Sewer Line Inspections

Selling a home can be a very stressful time for anyone. That is especially true when there has been a death in a family, a divorce or the loss of a job. Placing any sort of financial barrier in the way of selling a home – when selling the home is absolutely necessary – can lead to misery on a scale that no one should ever have to go through.

In April of 2017 our borough council unanimously voted to create what is known as a Use & Occupancy ordinance that impacts every home sale in our borough. **Our council put together the ordinance without seeking any input at all from those of us in the real estate profession.** The ordinance went into effect in September of 2017.

Several local agents have given me their permission to in-

clude their names and numbers here. We are members of your community, we are involved in borough life in many different ways and we want Jenkintown to continue to be a fantastic place to live and to raise a family. **Most important, we do not want any family or individual to be devastated by an ordinance requirement that is absolutely unnecessary and extremely costly.** If you would like to talk with any of us feel free to call whomever you are most comfortable talking to – or call us all.

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While our opinions and thoughts may differ in some ways, we all agree that the requirement for the video inspection of residential laterals should be removed from the Use & Occupancy ordinance. Following are the points that 4 of us made when we met with our Borough's Building and Zoning Committee on June 19th:

1. The cost associated with the application, inspection and mandated work is excessive and will unquestionably cause great harm to some Jenkintown families when they absolutely need to sell their home but are unable to due to an added cost of more than \$10,000. **Grace Shope had to spend \$11,729 to comply with the ordinance when she sold her 3 bedroom twin home on Runnymede Avenue last month.** Although Grace used an out of town agent to sell her home – she gave me written permission to publicize the cost that she incurred. Grace understands that the amount that she was forced to spend will represent an insurmountable hurdle to some families. **Last year an elderly woman who sold her small 3 bedroom twin home had to spend more than \$13,000 to comply with our onerous ordinance.**

Please Watch: [Very Human Frailty](#) 1:23
[The Courageous Single Mother](#) 2:54
[Health Issues Required Sale](#) 4:13

2. The stated reason that inspections were necessary is that groundwater infiltration of the waste water system is a real problem and a concern of our state's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). However, no other nearby community is requiring home sewer line inspections. Cheltenham was conducting home lateral inspections at the townships expense but **Cheltenham stopped inspections of their residential sewer laterals last year after the results of 2,110 inspections in Cheltenham Village and Glenside demonstrated conclusively that residential laterals are not significantly contributing to the problem of groundwater infiltration.** The real culprits are the mains and the interceptors – not the residential laterals.

Please watch: [Verifying This Is Easy](#) 3:23

3. A very viable, low cost alternative exists rather than costly inspections and mandated expensive work. Homeowners can purchase relatively inexpensive sewer line insurance for only \$10.49 per month from Home-serve – a company selected by Aqua to provide affordable coverage for sewer lateral problems. Here is a link to information for coverage with Homeserve:

[Homeserve's Exterior Sewer Line Coverage](#)

There are other insurance plans available through other companies as well. It should be noted that Homeserve's coverage will not cover work required by failing a municipal inspection. Our horror story of an ordinance transforms a very affordable insurable risk into what can prove to be an unaffordable major expense – right when a family is trying to sell their home.

4. **No other nearby community requires sewer lateral inspections when a home is sold – not Abington, not Cheltenham, not Rockledge, not Springfield, not Upper Dublin, not Hatboro, not Upper or Lower Moreland, not Ambler....**
5. We hope that at a minimum our council will reevaluate the need for sewer lateral inspections. The results of Cheltenham's extensive 2,110 inspections indicate that Jenkintown homeowners are being compelled to waste thousands of dollars needlessly.

Please Watch: [The Greatest We Can Ever Be](#) 2:43
[Jenkintown - A Shining Light](#) 3:35

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