

Root Intrusion Spotting Guide

What to watch for before a slow drain becomes a backup

Signs to track at home

- 1 Note which fixtures act up**
Write down which drains are slow and whether it is one fixture or several at the same time.
- 2 Listen for gurgling**
A toilet or floor drain that gurgles when another fixture empties is worth writing down, including when it happens.
- 3 Watch for repeat backups**
A clog that returns within weeks of being cleared points toward an ongoing cause rather than a one time event.
- 4 Look at the yard above the line**
A noticeably greener strip of grass over the lateral path is a pattern worth noting.

Questions to ask a plumber

- 1 Ask for a camera inspection, not just a snake**
A snake clears a clog. A camera shows what is actually inside the pipe and why.
- 2 Ask where along the line the roots are**
The location affects what options make sense for a lasting fix.
- 3 Ask what NYC DEP resources apply**
Confirm which parts of the service line process are relevant to your situation.

Questions to ask about the tree

- 1 Ask whether the source is a living tree or a stump**
A stump can keep sending out roots long after the tree above ground is gone.
- 2 Ask for a risk assessment before deciding**
An arborist can evaluate the tree's condition before any removal decision is made.
- 3 Ask how the plumbing and tree work should be sequenced**
Coordinating both sides avoids paying for the same problem twice.

Track the pattern, ask a plumber and an arborist, then decide with both answers in hand.

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