



Goal 3: Public Infrastructure

Desired Community Condition: **Wastewater system meets quality standards.**



Indicator: **Sewer Line Blockages**

Progress Rating: **Local Trend: POSITIVE** **National Comparison: BETTER**

Indicator Description

The sanitary sewer system includes the collection and transport of wastewater to Albuquerque’s wastewater treatment plant. This indicator shows the number of City of Albuquerque sewer line blockages for Fiscal Year 91 to Fiscal Year 03 and the amount of maintenance performed on the system. There are two type of maintenance: corrective and preventive. Corrective maintenance is performed in response to a problem; preventive maintenance is performed to prevent problems. The number of blockages is compared to other cities. Differences are not surprising, because studies have shown remarkable variation due to: root infiltration, ground movement and poor bedding soils, faulty pipe installation and inadequate protection from surface weights.

Why is this indicator important?

An efficient and effective sewage collection system is essential to the health of the population. Without this, sewer overflows and collapses may cause surface and groundwater water contamination and health threats due to exposure. In addition, minor leakage can turn into major leakage, requiring larger expenditures from the city budget to bring the system back into operation. Although not all problems can be prevented, preventive maintenance minimizes them. Because of the potential for contamination, this condition and indicator are related to other indicators of environmental protection.

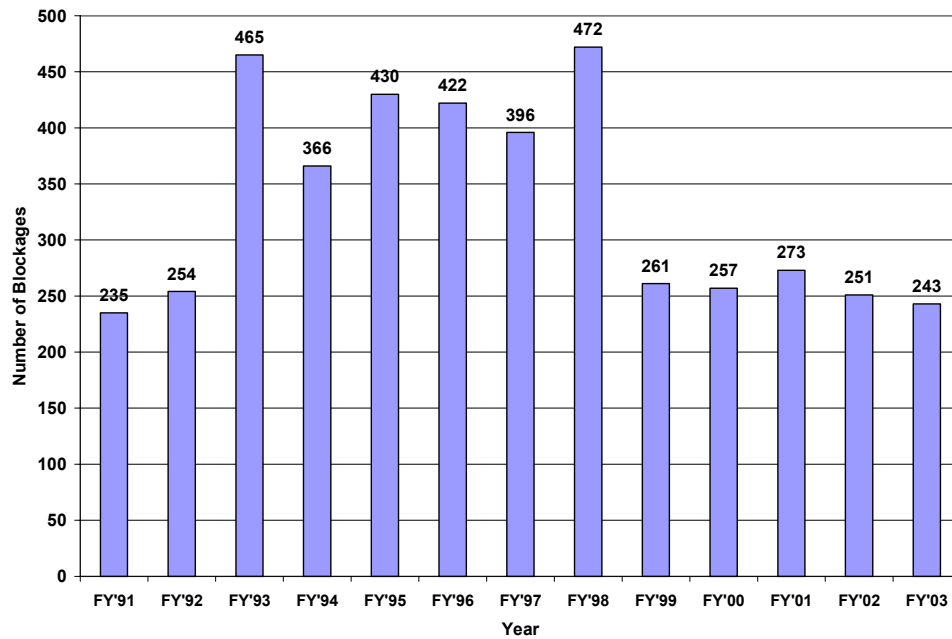
Data Sources

City of Albuquerque Public Works Department, Wastewater Division; “Municipal Benchmarks: Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community Standards,” Ammons, D.N., 2001

What can we tell from the data?

- The number of sewer line blockages has decreased 48.5% from its peak in 1998 to 2003. Since 1999, the number of sewer line blockages has remained fairly constant.
- The percentage of preventive maintenance has increased from 42.1% in 1991 to 82.5% in 2003. This also means that the amount of corrective maintenance has decreased.
- The reduction in sewer line blockages is most likely due to the increase in preventive maintenance.
- The number of blockages per 100 miles of sewer line in Albuquerque is significantly below the average of cities reporting.

Number of Sewer Line Blockages in Albuquerque 1991 to 2003



Number of Sewer Line Blockages and Maintenance Performed 1991 to 2003

Fiscal Year	Blockages	TOTAL MAINTENANCE (Feet)	Percent Preventive Maintenance	Total Length of Sewer Lines (Feet)
FY'91	235	2,860,354	42.1%	
FY'92	254	3,141,707	66.9%	
FY'93	465	3,712,738	72.4%	
FY'94	366	3,019,427	64.8%	7,980,000
FY'95	430	3,260,951	62.7%	
FY'96	422	3,703,222	61.9%	
FY'97	396	4,954,198	68.8%	
FY'98	472	3,860,231	72.2%	
FY'99	261	3,915,606	77.2%	9,240,000
FY'00	257	3,468,874	68.7%	
FY'01	273	3,297,510	83.4%	
FY'02	251	2,739,580	77.3%	
FY'03	243	2,553,834	82.5%	9,540,000

Number of Sewer Blockages per 100 Miles of Sewer Line in Selected Cities

City	Number of Blockages
Albuquerque, NM	13
Boise, ID	6
Durham, NC	95
Fort Collins, CO	53
Wichita, KS	30