DRIP LINES KNOWLEDGE BRIEF

Facility Manager's Sewer Camera Inspection Checklist

How to Use This Checklist
This checklist is designed to help commercial facility and property management teams turn sewer camera inspections into a proactive planning tool — not just a reaction to backups, odors, or emergencies. You don't need plumbing expertise to use this. The goal isn't to diagnose pipes yourself. The goal is to make sure inspections are planned properly, findings are documented clearly, and any recommended repairs are validated with real evidence.

Start by completing the Facility & System Overview section before your next inspection. Even partial information is helpful. Knowing the building type, age, usage, and history gives context to inspection findings and helps vendors tailor their approach instead of guessing.

Use the Inspection Planning and Vendor sections **before** the camera ever goes into the pipe. This ensures the inspection is intentional, scheduled at the right time, and performed with equipment suited for commercial systems — not rushed or incomplete service.

During and after the inspection, use the checklist as a reference while reviewing footage and reports. You don't need to understand every technical detail. Focus on whether issues are shown clearly, explained in plain language, and tied to specific locations within the system. When repairs are recommended, use the checklist to validate scope and urgency. The camera footage should support the work being proposed. If it doesn't, pause and ask questions before approving costs.

Finally, treat this checklist as a living document. Save it with your facility records or CMMS and reference it after repairs, during budgeting cycles, and when evaluating vendors. Over time, it becomes a record of system health — not just a single inspection. Used consistently, this checklist helps reduce surprises, improve communication, and support smarter plumbing decisions across your portfolio.

Facility & System Overview

☐ Facility name and location
☐ Building type (restaurant, retail, medical, office, multi-family, mixed use)
☐ Year building was constructed
☐ Approximate age of sewer piping
☐ Pipe materials known (cast iron, PVC, ABS, clay, mixed, unknown)
☐ Number of floors served by the sewer system
☐ Kitchens, restrooms, or high-use fixtures connected to the line
☐ History of backups, slow drains, or sewer odors
☐ Recent remodels, tenant improvements, or fixture changes

Inspection Planning & Scheduling

☐ Inspection scheduled proactively (not during an emergency)
☐ Inspection aligned with preventive maintenance calendar
☐ Inspection timed before peak season or high-traffic periods
☐ Inspection planned after major construction or tenant turnover
☐ Access points identified (cleanouts, manholes, access panels)
☐ Operations team notified of inspection timing
☐ Vendor confirmed proper commercial-grade camera equipment
☐ Inspection scope defined (full main line, branch lines, specific zones)

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Vendor & Equipment Verification

☐ Vendor experienced in commercial sewer systems
☐ Technician trained in sewer camera diagnostics
☐ Camera capable of recording and saving video footage
☐ Camera has sufficient lighting and resolution
☐ Camera push length appropriate for building size
☐ Locator or sonde available for identifying defect locations
☐ Vendor can provide digital files or cloud-based access
☐ Vendor understands documentation requirements for management

During the Inspection: What to Confirm

☐ Entire scoped area is actually inspected
☐ Video recording begins at a known access point
☐ Pipe material transitions are identified
☐ Standing water levels are noted
☐ Pipe alignment issues are called out
☐ Cracks, corrosion, scaling, or deformation are shown clearly
☐ Root intrusion or foreign objects are documented
☐ Grease buildup or sediment accumulation is identified
☐ Line condition is explained in plain language

Inspection Documentation & Deliverables

☐ Full video footage provided (not just snapshots)
☐ Written summary explaining findings in non-technical terms
☐ Location references included (distance, direction, access point)
☐ Severity of issues clearly identified
☐ Immediate risks distinguished from future concerns
☐ Recommendations tied to findings — not assumptions
☐ Report delivered in a shareable digital format
☐ Documentation saved to facility records or CMMS

Interpreting Results for Maintenance Planning

☐ No-action findings documented for future reference
☐ Preventive maintenance needs identified
☐ Short-term repair risks prioritized
☐ Long-term capital planning considerations noted
☐ Findings compared to past inspections (if available)
☐ Inspection results reviewed internally before approving work
☐ Budget implications evaluated before decisions are made

Repair Authorization & Scope Validation

☐ Repair recommendations tied directly to camera evidence
☐ Scope of work aligns with documented problem areas
☐ Repair urgency confirmed (immediate vs. planned)
☐ Alternative repair options discussed if applicable
☐ Cost estimates reviewed against inspection severity
☐ Repair scope approved based on risk, not fear
☐ Timeline coordinated to minimize operational disruption

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Post-Repair Verification

☐ Follow-up camera inspection scheduled
☐ Post-repair footage confirms issue resolution
☐ Repair area clearly shown on video
☐ Remaining system condition reassessed
☐ Warranty or workmanship documentation provided
☐ Before-and-after footage saved for records
☐ Repair marked complete in CMMS or facility logs

Ongoing Preventive Strategy

☐ Inspection frequency established based on building risk
☐ High-risk areas scheduled for more frequent checks
☐ Inspection data used to adjust PM schedules
☐ Repeat issues tracked across inspections
☐ Vendor performance evaluated using inspection outcomes
☐ Inspection insights shared with ownership or leadership
☐ Sewer system included in long-term asset planning

Internal Communication & Accountability

☐ Findings summarized for non-technical stakeholders
☐ Inspection outcomes communicated to tenants if needed
☐ Documentation available for insurance or compliance inquiries
☐ Leadership informed of major risks or avoided failures
☐ Inspection program reviewed annually for effectiveness

This checklist is meant to turn sewer camera inspections into a **management tool**, not just a service call. When inspections are planned, documented, reviewed, and verified correctly, they reduce surprises, support better budgeting, and protect both the facility and the people who rely on it every day.