

Apprentice & Journeymen Training Trust Fund

Of the Southern California Plumbing & Piping Industry

Sewer Snake Policy & Procedure

1. Proper Protective Equipment (P.P.E.) must be worn during all pipe roll grooving operations:
 - ANSI Z87 rated safety glasses with side shields are required.
 - Heavy duty leather gloves. Refer to Figure 1-10 Welding Glove Recommendations.
 - Work attire – long pants, long-sleeved shirt, sleeves.
 - Work boots must be ankle high or greater.
 2. Safety precautions:
 - Sewer snake must be plugged into an electrical receptacle equipped with a ground.
 - Extension cords must be heavy duty. Cord shall be no longer than 50 feet. Too light gauge extension cord can cause motor to overheat.
 - **NEVER** operate sewer snakes in standing water.
 - **NEVER** use a snake in lines containing chemical drain cleaner.
- Use of a Portable Ground Fault Circuit (GFCI) is required for all power tools connecting to a temporary power/extension cord**
- In this order: (1) Electric Plug Receptacle, (2) GFCI, (3) Cord and (4) Tool**
3. Use of sewer snake:
 - Snake is designed for single person operation. Operator must control foot pedal and cable.
 - Position snake within 2 feet of drain opening. If you are unable to position snake within 2 feet, you must run a cable through a piece of pipe to prevent whipping.
 - Pull cable from cage.
 - Punch cable down the drain until it will go no further.
 - Remove an additional foot of cable, forming an arc between the machine and the drain.
 - Tighten thumb screw against cable.
 - Switch machine motor to the forward position.
 - Cable must be held with two hands. Engage foot switch.
 - Guide cable into the drain with firm, even pressure. Let the machine do the work.
 - **NEVER** leave excessive slack in cable, this can cause whipping.
 - If there is too much bend or twist in the cable:
 - Operator must remove pressure from foot pedal, rotate cage in the opposite direction to relieve the twist and push excess cable back into cage.
 - When slack cable has been fed into the drain, stop the machine motor, loosen thumb screw, remove another foot of cable from the cage, tighten thumb screw and repeat until drain line is cleared.
 - When drain line is cleared, relieve pressure from foot pedal, loosen thumb screw, switch the machine motor to the reverse position, return cable back to the cage, unplug the machine and rinse off cable in an appropriate location.
 4. Tips for sewer snake operations:
 - If you are having trouble getting around bends, try:
 - Putting machine motor in reverse while apply steady pressure.
 - **NEVER** do this for more than a few seconds, as it can cause kinking or tangling of the cable inside the cage.
 - If cable becomes caught in line:
 - With thumb screw tightened against the cable, move the machine motor into the reverse position. Pull on the cable while cage rotates in reverse.
 - When the cable is free, loosen the thumb screw and move machine motor into the forward position.