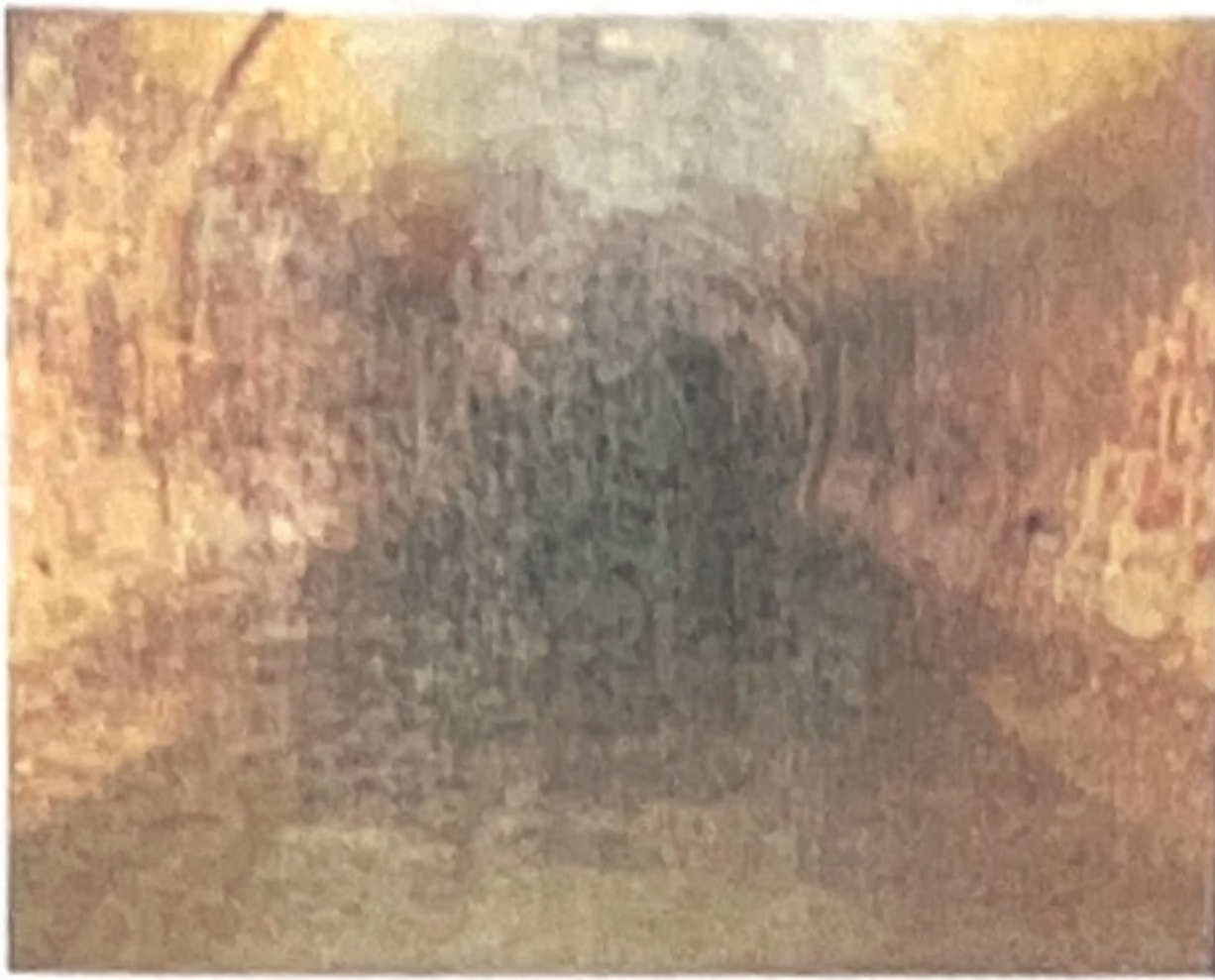


Fix It before It Breaks: Palm Beach Uses Innovative Trenchless Methods to Prevent Saltwater Damage in Storm Sewer

By Angus W. Stocking, L.S.



The Town of Palm Beach is sited on a long, narrow barrier island 65 miles north of Miami, Florida, and is well known for its many multi-million dollar mansions. The expensive real estate and the ever present saltwater are major complications for the Public Works Department; saltwater corrodes everything, and digging things up for repair is always costly. So, maintenance and trenchless methods are high priorities and the department is always alert for new technologies.

As part of a larger project, Palm Beach recently cleaned and rehabilitated 225 feet of 60-inch reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) storm sewer that was about 30 years old. “There were basically two access points,” says Brandon Depicciotto, owner of Underground Services of America, based in West Palm Beach, “the pump room, and the outlet in the Intracoastal Waterway.” Depicciotto was working from the intracoastal side, and was using two relatively new technologies: a spray-on lining called COR+ROC[®], and an application method called Centri-Pipe[®]. Both are made by AP/M PERMAFORM of Johnston, Iowa, a firm that specializes in trenchless solutions. “I’ve used similar products and methods on manholes,” Depicciotto explains, “but this was the first time on horizontal pipe.”

COR+ROC[®] is a two-component, high-strength polymer gel intended for one-step structural lining and corrosion protection. It has several advantages that made it especially well suited for the Palm Beach project. It doesn’t sag, so it can be used on horizontal pipe. It’s moisture insensitive and bonds well to wet surfaces, so the sewer’s constant coastal dampness wouldn’t be a problem. And, when set, COR+ROC[®] is a public works director’s dream product—not only is it structural, adding significant strength to rehabilitated pipe, it also works much like epoxy coatings to prevent corrosion