

Lead Service Line Replacement Program

The City of Milwaukee has begun a long-term, systematic replacement of lead service lines (LSL) with copper. The water utility owns the section of service line from the cast iron water main in the street to the curb stop at the property line. The property owner owns the section from the curb stop to the water meter.

The lead service line from the water main to the water meter must be replaced only if:

- A lead service line is found to be leaking
- A lead service line is damaged during planned construction
- The utility-owned section of the LSL is replaced on a planned or emergency basis

In these cases, the Milwaukee Water Works (MWW) immediately notifies a property owner if this is required.

If replacement is required:

The property owner can use the city contractor to replace the private section of the line:

- The water utility will hire the contractor and pay the cost up front.
- The property owner can repay the cost to the city immediately, but by using the city contractor, the property owner is eligible to repay the city using **special assessment financing** over 10 years. Interest is charged on any unpaid balance. This is similar to how street projects are assessed to properties.
- Also, properties with 1-4 dwelling units are eligible for a **city cost-share**. The cost will be only \$1,600 to replace their privately-owned section of the LSL. The average cost to replace a private section of a LSL in 2017 was \$7,000.

OR

The property owner can hire and pay a contractor to replace their section of lead service line while the city replaces the utility-owned section.

No action is required of property owners with a lead service line that is not leaking or damaged.

- If you choose to replace and pay for replacement of your section of the lead service line, please obtain an estimate from a licensed plumber and notify MWW Customer Service, (414) 286-2830. The utility will then replace its section of the lead service line.

It is possible sources of lead will remain in internal plumbing. Property owners may want to hire a licensed plumber to replace lead pipes, lead solder on copper or galvanized plumbing, galvanized steel, and fixtures, like a kitchen faucet.

Replacements of utility-owned sections of LSLs are paid by MWW revenue from water rates. Private side sections are paid using Safe Drinking Water Loan funds (SDWL). There is no retroactive payment to property owners for LSLs replaced before 2017.

Search our records to see if a property has a lead service line at milwaukee.gov/water.

