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JERSEY WATERWORKS CONFERENCE 2024

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Advancing Public Health: Lessons Learned From Two Years of Accelerating Lead Service Line Replacement (LSLR) in New Jersey Communities



DEBBIE MANS

Partner, TWENTYTWO
public affairs
Steering Committee Co-
Chair, Lead-Free NJ



DEANDRAH CAMERON

Policy Manager,
New Jersey Future



YOLANDA TUCCI
MCCOLLOM, PE

Environmental Engineer,
Ridgewood Water



JYOTI VENKETRAMAN

Director of Collaborations &
Organizational Equity,
New Jersey Future, Jersey
WaterCheck Data
Dashboard

1.3 CPC CREDITS

THE POWER OF COLLABORATION: TOWARDS A ONE WATER FUTURE

New report by:

Jersey Water Works
Lead Service Line
Implementation Workgroup

Intern

- Marisela Sotelo Tornero,
Pennsylvania State University

Co-chairs

- Mike Furrey, Manager, PACE
Analytical Services
- Rich Calbi, Executive Director,
Ridgewood Water

Water Utilities

- Kareem Adeem, Director,
Department of Water and Sewer
Utilities, City of Newark
- Laura Norkute, Director, New
Jersey American Water
- Jan Chwiedosiuk, Director of
Distribution Systems, Middlesex
Water Company
- Noemi de la Puente, Principal
Engineer, Trenton Water Works

Municipal

- Stephen Marks, Town
Administrator, Town of Kearny

Lessons Learned:

Two Years of Accelerating Lead Service Line
Replacement in New Jersey Communities



Public Policy

- Diane Schrauth, Policy
Director, Water, New Jersey
Future
- Gary Brune, Senior Policy
Adviser, New Jersey Future
- Deandrah Cameron, Policy
Manager, New Jersey Future
- Doug O'Malley, Executive
Director, Environment NJ

Consultants

- Sandra Kutzing, Vice President,
CDM Smith
- Kristen Epstein, Northeastern
US LCR Compliance
Coordinator, CDM Smith
- Adam Burger, Client Services
Manager, One Water Regional
Treatment Operations Lead,
Northeast US, STV Inc.



Advancing Public Health

Smart Infrastructure. Lead-Free Communities.



Smart Infrastructure. Lead-Free Communities.

Key Challenges:

Policy Inconsistencies:

Lack of uniformity in LSLR policies across municipalities can cause confusion and erode public trust.

Low Public Awareness:

Many homeowners may not be aware of the risks posed by lead pipes or the need for replacement, hindering participation in programs.

Implementation Issues:

High costs, delays, and administrative hurdles complicate LSLR efforts and discourage participation from both water systems and property owners.

Financial Burdens on Customers:

Without sufficient financing options, low-income households face financial barriers, making it difficult to comply with mandated LSLR programs.

Municipal-Level Recommendations



Smart Infrastructure. Lead-Free Communities.

- **Coordinate with Infrastructure Projects:**
 - **Bundle LSLR with other municipal projects** (e.g., road paving, sewer maintenance, utility upgrades) to reduce costs and minimize road disruptions.
 - Work across jurisdictions to leverage **economies of scale** and bulk purchasing of materials to achieve cost savings while speeding up the replacement process.
- **Waive Road Opening Moratoriums:**
 - Suspend existing **moratoriums** on road openings for the period 2021-2031 to facilitate quicker LSLR work. Moratoriums can otherwise delay replacements by up to five years.
 - Allow for **permit issuance** for LSLR projects even when roads have recently been paved, ensuring projects are not unnecessarily delayed.
- **Optimize Traffic Control:**
 - Reduce reliance on **off-duty police officers** for traffic enforcement by using lower-cost **special traffic control agents** or certified traffic agents.
 - Use **regular officers** and avoid expensive senior officers or off-duty overtime. Traffic management costs can increase project expenses by 10-30%, so reducing these costs can help streamline implementation.

Water System Recommendations

- **Public Health Education & Outreach:**

- Water systems should use **multiple communication channels** (in-person, phone, email, text, etc.) to ensure property owners are aware of the need for LSLR.
- Develop **interactive online tools** (e.g., LSL mapping) and share them with the public to increase **transparency** and provide **real-time information** about service line replacements.
- Engage residents, particularly in **high-risk areas** like schools and daycare facilities, where children are most vulnerable to lead exposure.

- **Financing Options & Incentives:**

- Water systems should provide **no-cost incentives** and **financing options** to minimize customer costs.
- Offer **government subsidies** or **water bonds** to assist low-income households and make the replacement process more equitable.
- Create **discounts for eligible recipients** of government assistance programs (e.g., SNAP, WIC, veterans, low-income water bill assistance).

- **Accurate Inventory & Tracking:**

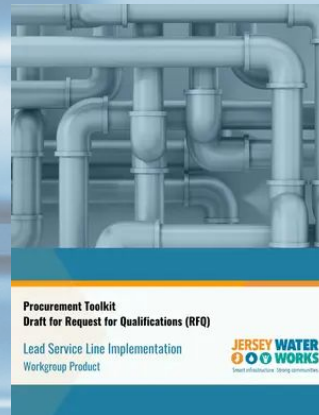
- Review historical records, inspect properties, and engage the community to identify service lines to ensure a thorough LSL inventory.
- **Track progress** through key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure replacement rates and completion timelines to ensure accountability and transparency.
- Engage with property owners to obtain accurate service line data and begin replacements in areas with the highest risk of lead exposure.

Tools & Resources

- Use resources such as the **2023 Primer on Key Efficiency Measures** and **Procurement Toolkit** for guidance on best practices and streamlining the replacement process.
- Leverage **interactive mapping tools** (e.g., Trenton Water Works) to engage the community and increase transparency about LSL locations and progress.
- Review **model ordinances** for property access and use the **NJDEP Resident Refusal Form** to facilitate compliance with replacement mandates.

Next Steps

- **Develop and refine policies** based on the recommendations outlined to ensure greater efficiency and success in meeting LSLR mandates.
- **Increase investment** in public education and outreach to raise awareness about the risks of lead exposure and the need for service line replacements.



Conclusion



- **LSLR is Essential** for protecting public health and ensuring safe drinking water for all communities, particularly vulnerable populations.
- To overcome existing challenges, a **multi-pronged approach** that includes policy standardization, efficient project coordination, clear communication, and robust enforcement mechanisms is necessary.
- **Equity must be at the forefront** to ensure low-income and disadvantaged communities are not left behind in LSLR efforts.
- With these **strategies and recommendations**, water systems can minimize lead exposure, build community trust, and secure a safer water future for all.



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Lead Service Line Data

Identification of LSL - P.L.2021, Ch.183 (A5343/S3398):

Initial LSL inventories: **Counts** - Sept. 20, 2021; **Inventory** - January 22, 2022

Updated LSL inventory- July (annually)

Inventory must be online for larger systems, publicly available for all systems

Replacement of all LSLs by July 2031

Annual report plan of progress in replacement (annual replacement rate of 10%)

LSL Law Compliance

Certification in compliance with LSL law

JWC Interface Possibilities

Complement to NJDEP detailed online information

Relate LSL issues to other asset management issues

Display granular by LSL information by PWSID

Track trends by utility and statewide (snapshot in time)

Track change over time across (annual update)

Redirect to utility websites that provide “in real time” data

What can we learn from JWC Data

Statewide Aggregate: 133,747 known and 877622 unknowns for 2023.

Fuzzy data trend (rollercoaster trend)- individual capacity including unique challenges impacts speed and trajectory.

Data quality varies from system to system.

Sustained funding and peer support is vital to help everyone get to finish line.