



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

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Re: Important Information on Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR) Changes for Public Water Suppliers to Share with their Municipal and Community Leaders and Partners

January 31, 2025

Dear Community and Non-transient Non-Community PWS,

As a public water supplier (PWS), you play a critical role in ensuring safe drinking water for the communities you serve. As you are aware, the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) introduced several important changes aimed at providing safe drinking water and protecting public health, particularly in addressing lead exposure in drinking water.

On October 16, 2024, the following key changes to the LCRR became effective:

- **PWS must complete and maintain a service line inventory.** This inventory must identify and categorize service lines based on material type, such as lead, copper, or unknown.
- **PWS must provide consumer notifications,** including direct notices to customers that may have lead service lines and,
- **PWS must issue within 24 hours a Tier 1 public notice** if the PWS exceeds the 90th percentile action level for lead (0.015 mg/L).

Given the scope of these LCRR changes and the potential impact on your community, MassDEP requests that you share this letter and attachment with your municipal and community leaders and partners. Sharing this information will ensure that they are fully aware of the changes required by EPA, MassDEP, and you, to protect public health. This information will provide valuable information and assist you and your municipal and community leaders and partners with the following activities:

1. **Informed Decision-Making:** Your municipal and community leaders and partners should understand the new requirements, so they can support your efforts to complete the service line inventories and comply with the new consumer notification requirements, in addition to supporting any lead service line replacement and service line investigation efforts needed or on-going in the community.

This information is available in alternate format. Please contact MassDEP at 617-292-5500.
TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370
MassDEP Website: www.mass.gov/dep

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2. **Community Engagement and Education:** By working together, PWSs and municipal and community leaders and partners can engage with residents to ensure they receive accurate and timely information regarding their drinking water quality. One key message that all municipal/community partners should share with the community is to remind consumers that their public drinking water is regularly tested for safety and compliance with local, state, and federal drinking water regulations, and that their PWS source water provided to each home meets the lead action level, however, lead can be picked up in the service lines and internal home or facility plumbing when the water is not used for several hours or more, if plumbing contains lead. As such, consumers can protect themselves while addressing the removal of lead service line lines or plumbing by flushing the lines before using water for drinking or cooking. MassDEP has provided specific guidance on how to address lead in drinking water, both short and long term, without the need and cost for additional treatment devices. See guidance at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/consumers-frequently-asked-questions-about-the-lcrr-service-line-inventory>.
3. **Public Health Protection: New 24-Hour Tier 1 Public Notice:** PWS service line inventories, publicly accessible information on the material of each service line and what to do about lead service lines, and the 24-hour Tier 1 public notification when the PWS exceeds the lead action level (0.015 mg/L), are designed to protect public health by addressing lead exposure risks. Municipal and community leaders' and partners' awareness, collaboration, and support will be essential in making sure these protections are communicated effectively to the public.
4. **Collaboration and Support:** Sharing these changes helps to foster collaboration between PWSs and local government officials, and partners, ensuring that all necessary resources are allocated to meet the new regulatory requirements and safeguard the health of your community.
5. **Addressing the uptick in unsolicited offers for home treatment units:** Please be aware that with the new PWS requirement to make publicly accessible the location of all service lines, your community may see an uptick in the number of unsolicited requests from home treatment devices vendors. **Please be aware that this type of outreach is not a part of, nor affiliated with MassDEP and we strongly encourage consumers to follow their PWS's and MassDEP's guidance on short- and long-term solutions to address lead in drinking water.** See link above in #2.

Also please note that beginning 2027, all community public water systems must offer to test and conduct sampling in at least 20% of the elementary schools and 20% of their early education and care facilities (EECFs) per year in their service area for lead.

MassDEP requests that you share this information with your municipal and community leaders and partners detailing these important changes. This will help to ensure your municipal and community leaders and partners are knowledgeable of the issues and working together with you to implement all LCRR changes to address the public health concern posed by lead.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing commitment to providing safe drinking water to your community. If you have any questions or need further guidance, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov or 617-292-5770.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yvette DePeiza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Yvette" being more prominent.

Yvette DePeiza
Program Director
MassDEP/BWR/Drinking Water Program

See Attachment



Drinking Water Program

Important Information on Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR) Changes for Public Water Suppliers to Share with their Municipal and Community Leaders and Partners

There are critical updates to the federal Lead and Copper Rule drinking water requirements for public water suppliers called the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) and the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) changing how lead is regulated in drinking water in Massachusetts and nationwide. These changes are part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) ongoing efforts to protect public health by reducing lead and copper exposure in drinking water. A summary of the Lead and Copper Rule updates is provided in the Attachment (below).

You may receive questions from your residents on the updates to the Lead and Copper Rule and the information below will help you to understand and address these questions. The three key components of these updates are:

1. **Service Line Inventory:** As of **October 16, 2024**, your local public water systemsⁱ (PWS) were required to complete an inventory of all service lines in their distribution system. A service line is the pipe that carries water from the main pipe in the street into a building. The purpose of the inventory is to: identify which service lines (1) are or contain lead, (2) may contain leadⁱⁱ, or (3) do not contain lead; make the inventory publicly available and MassDEP strongly encouraged PWS to expeditiously develop a plan for identifying and replacing all lead service lines. PWS will continue updating their inventory as they verify materials and replace lead service lines. For more information on what is a service line see the Attachment. For the current list of submitted and reviewed service line inventories, please visit the [Massachusetts Service Line Inventories Hub Site](#). Please note that this hub is updated as inventories are reviewed.
2. **Consumer Notification:** As of **November 15, 2024**, all consumers of your local PWS with a service line that has or may contain lead should have been notified in writing by the PWS of the steps they can take to reduce lead exposure, health risks posed by leadⁱⁱⁱ and any opportunities for service line replacement or verification. PWS are required to continue distributing these notices to consumers annually and sharing the public health language in their materials until their service line is verified as non-lead. For more information on Consumer Notification for service lines, please visit [Consumer's Frequently Asked Questions about the LCRR Service Line Inventory | Mass.gov](#)
3. **24-hour Public Notice:** As of **October 16, 2024**, any PWS that exceeds the 90th percentile^{iv} lead action level of 15 parts per billion must now notify all affected consumers within **24-hours** of the exceedance. This is called a **Tier 1 Public Notice**. This is a new requirement that must be met in addition to issuing routine Public Education materials. Each municipal leader and their local PWS must plan, well in advance, to quickly respond with a public notice within 24-hours of exceeding the lead action level. At a minimum, each PWS should have a draft copy of a Tier 1 Public Notice

ready in their Emergency Response Plan in case they have to provide notice within 24-hours. To learn when your local PWS will next be sampling for lead, please see <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/public-water-supplier-document-search>. (Select the PWS by name, press Retrieve Documents and then open the Compliance Monitoring Schedule.) If your PWS's Compliance Monitoring Schedule does not show the exact schedule, such as some Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) systems, we encourage you to reach out to your PWS directly to discuss their sampling schedule. To see the latest 90th percentile lead results for your PWS, please see <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/results-of-lead-sampling-for-public-water-systems>. For more information on 24-hour Tier 1 Public Notice, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/lists/public-notification-forms-and-templates>.

As a municipal or community leader or partner, your role in helping to implement these critical updates is vital to ensuring the health and safety of your community. The steps outlined in the LCRR will significantly reduce the risks of lead exposure through drinking water, and your ongoing efforts to meet these requirements are essential in protecting the public health of Massachusetts residents.

Community and Municipal leaders and partners should support their local PWS to ensure they can:

- **Continue working on identifying service line materials** (lead, galvanized pipe requiring replacement and unknown material) and updating the publicly accessible service line inventory.
- **Prioritize the replacement of lead service lines**, especially in neighborhoods that are most vulnerable to lead exposure. Consider available funding opportunities and programs that may assist in covering the costs of replacement.
- **Educate the community** about the new rules and the importance of lead-free drinking water. Promoting transparency and open communication will help build public trust and ensure residents are aware of the steps being taken to address lead contamination.
- **Use state and federal support** to help cover the costs of compliance, including funding for lead service line replacement programs and technical assistance for PWS. Massachusetts is offering funding to help communities replace lead service lines through the State Revolving Fund. For more information about these funding see: [Lead Service Line Replacement Program | Mass.gov](#).
- **Educate Consumers to address the uptick in unsolicited offers of home treatment units.** Please be aware that with the new PWS requirement to make publicly accessible the location of all service lines, your community may see an uptick in the number of unsolicited offers from home treatment devices vendors. **This unsolicited sales outreach is not a part of, nor affiliated with, the MassDEP Drinking Water Program. All PWS in Massachusetts have source waters that meet the lead action level; however, lead may be in the piping connecting the distribution lines in the street and in internal home and facility plumbing. In the short-term, consumers may flush their lines to use the source water from the distribution lines in the street for drinking and cooking. This allows the service line to distribute water that does not exceed the action level. The flushed water may be used for other non-human consumption purposed, e.g. laundry, washing floors, etc. We strongly encourage consumers to**

follow their PWS's and MassDEP's guidance on short- and long-term solutions to address lead in drinking water until all lead service lines are replaced and unknown service lines are determined to be non-lead. MassDEP has created a Frequently Asked Questions webpage for Consumers, regarding Lead and Copper questions; the webpage is available here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/consumers-frequently-asked-questions-about-the-lcrr-service-line-inventory>.

The commitment of PWSs, municipal and community leaders and their partners to safeguarding drinking water is a cornerstone of public health, and the actions you take to replace lead service lines, investigate service line materials, notify consumers, and adhere to regulatory timelines will have a lasting positive impact.

Attachment: Frequently asked Questions about the Lead and Copper Rule Changes and How PWS, Municipal and Community Leaders and Partners must work together to address these changes and continue to provide safe drinking water

ⁱ Includes Community public water systems that serve cities and towns, and non-transient non-community public water systems that serve schools, or other facilities that are not residential. The requirement is not applicable to transient, non-community public water systems such as restaurants and hotels that are not frequented by the same people each day.

ⁱⁱ Includes pipes of unknown material and pipes called Galvanized Requiring Replacement (GRR). These pipes are or were downstream of lead pipes.

ⁱⁱⁱ LCRI health language that MassDEP is recommending PWS use "There is no safe level of lead in drinking water. Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Some of the health effects to infants and children include decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can also result in new or worsened learning and behavior problems. The children of persons who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy may be at increased risk of these harmful health effects. Adults have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems. Contact your health care provider for more information about your risks."

^{iv} The level of a lead below which 90% of all water samples taken in a monitoring period fall, essentially a level that is exceeded by only 10% of the samples.

Attachment

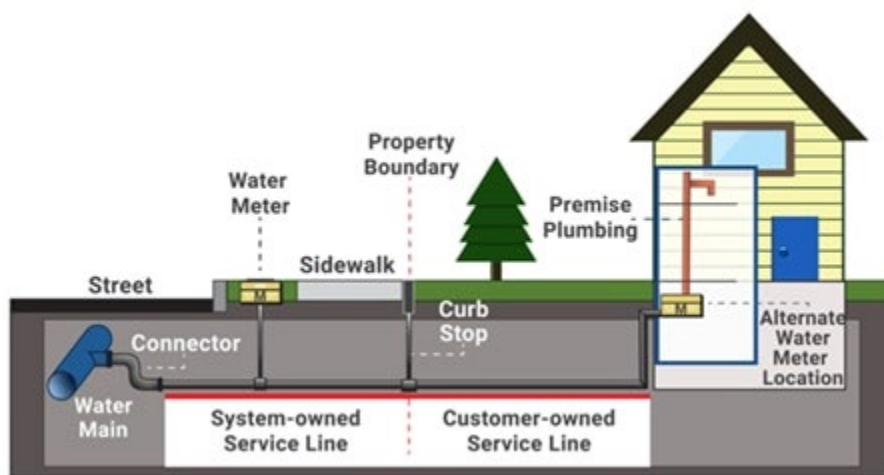
Frequently asked Questions about the Lead and Copper Rule Changes and How PWS, Municipal and Community Leaders and Partners must work together to address these changes and continue to provide safe drinking water.

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What is a Service Line?

A Service Line is defined as the pipe connecting the water main in the street to the interior plumbing in a building. The service line may be owned wholly by the water system or customer, or in some cases, ownership may be split between the water system and the customer.



A Service Line typically has two segments, which could be made of the same or different material. The first segment is from the water main to the curb stop (the buried valve near the property line), and generally is owned by the PWS (**public or system-owned segment**), while the second segment is from the curb stop to your home (**private or customer-owned segment**) and is usually privately owned by the consumer.

- If the **public segment is "Lead or Lead Status Unknown,"** it will be identified and addressed by your PWS. Public segment identification typically involves the PWS digging in the street to identify and replace the service line.
- If the **private segment is "Lead or Lead Status Unknown,"** you may be able to identify it on your own or may be asked by your PWS to assist with the identification. Your consumer notice should tell you how to help with the identification, if needed.

How can consumers assist their PWS in identifying the Service Line material on their privately-owned segment?

- You may identify the private segment of your service line in two ways: Contact your PWS and have them inspect it **or inspect the service line on your own and inform your PWS.**
- In Massachusetts, many service lines are visible in the basement, or where the service line enters the building if the home does not have a basement, such as if you have a water meter within the building.
- EPA has released a helpful guide on how to identify your service line, which is the [Protect Your Tap: A Quick Check for Lead](#). This guide will walk you through how to identify where your service line is, how to determine the material, and provides pictures of materials you can compare it to.
- **After you have identified your service line material, you may send this to your PWS. There are multiple ways to do this:**
 - MassDEP DWP created the [Mass Lead Service Line Identification \(MA-LSLI\) Web App](#), which consumers can use to send pictures of their service line directly to their PWS to verify their service line.
 - **If your PWS is signed up for this, they can receive your picture and contact you directly if needed to confirm the service line material.** If your PWS is signed up, they may have included information on this app in the consumer notice you received, they will also be listed in the application form itself.
 - **If your PWS is not signed up with this app, you should contact them directly.** The PWS must provide contact information on their consumer notices. Either emailing them with your picture and explaining that you received this notice, or calling them to discuss, are great ways to inform your PWS of the service line material.

If you would like to learn more about the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, and its requirements, you may visit the [LCRR webpage](#). This webpage also contains a [section specifically for Consumers](#), with a link to [Frequently Asked Questions page for Consumers](#), and the new [Massachusetts Service Line Inventory webpage](#). This Service Line Inventory webpage displays all PWS in Massachusetts, and their Service Line Inventories.

In this website you can also find the LCRR Service Line Inventory Press and Media Toolkit which is a compilation of materials that can be shared digitally (social media), physically (flyers) and through broadcasting (a slide deck) to your community, to interest your community into helping local public water suppliers to identify service lines in their service area. For more information see [LCRR Media SLI Toolkit 01.docx | Mass.gov](#) and [MassDEP LCRR SLI Toolkit PowerPoint.pptx | Mass.gov](#).

- If you would like to see the inventory for your PWS, you may either contact your PWS directly to see where they have their inventory available or review the [Massachusetts map of inventories](#), which is updated after inventories are reviewed. Some PWS have interactive maps where you can search addresses and find each service line on the map, a feature which will be included in the state map in coming months.
- Please reach out to the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov if you have any further questions regarding the Lead and Copper Rule Consumer Notices.

What is the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR)?

The LCRR, finalized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2021, includes several key requirements that public water systems must comply with to further reduce the risks of lead and copper contamination in drinking water. These revisions were designed to strengthen protections for communities, especially for children and vulnerable populations, and enhance transparency around water quality issues.

EPA estimates the national benefits of Lead and Copper Rule Updates (both the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) and the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI)) to include:

- Protecting up to 900,000 infants from having low birthweight;
- Preventing Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in up to 2,600 children;
- Reducing up to 1,500 cases of premature death from heart disease;
- Preventing up to 200,000 IQ points lost in children; and

- Investments in identifying lead pipes, planning for their removal, and replacing them will create jobs in local communities while strengthening the foundation of safe drinking water that supports economic opportunity.

What are the critical components of the LCRR with deadlines?

1. **Service Line Inventory completed and publicly accessible by October 16, 2024.** Systems that serve a population greater than 50,000 are required to publish their inventory online.
2. **Consumer Notices Distributed by November 15, 2024,** PWSs were required to notify all consumers affected by service lines that are lead or galvanized requiring replacement, or where the material is unknown. Notices – which clearly identify the service line material(s), public health risks, recommended actions and contact information – were delivered to the home or facility owner by mail, hand delivery or other approved delivery methods. Some recommended actions to consumers include flushing taps, using water filters properly and considering service line replacement. In some cases, customers may be instructed to submit photos of their plumbing via secure communications to their local water supplier. Facilities must post these notices in locations with high visibility (e.g., entrance, bulletin boards, etc.). MassDEP anticipates approximately **one million notices** were distributed to consumers across the state.

These notices will be repeated annually or more frequently until the lead is removed or unknown materials are identified as non-lead, and to new consumers. Municipal and Community leaders and partners should prepare to address the uptick in expected consumer questions each time these notices are sent out.

[More information about the consumer notices can be found at Consumer's Frequently Asked Questions about the LCRR Service Line Inventory | Mass.gov.](#)

3. After **October 16, 2024**, PWS must issue 24 hour- expedited Public Notification to their consumers when/if the PWS exceeds the lead action level of 15 parts per billion (0.015 mg/L) by notifying all consumers within 24 hours of the exceedance. MassDEP has provided template notices and training to ensure PWSs are prepared to comply with the new requirements. MassDEP provides financial assistance to PWSs through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to replace lead service lines. MassDEP expects PWS to work with their Municipal and Community leaders and partners to get these notices out promptly. PWS must keep these documents ready in their emergency response plan in accordance with 310 CMR 22.04(13) and be ready to provide such notice if/when required. In addition to reporting to MassDEP, PWSs must also now report electronically directly to EPA, via email to

LeadALE@epa.gov, on their compliance with this new 24-hour expedited Public Notice.

What is the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI)?

The next phase is the **Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI)**, with a **2027 compliance date**, which will continue to build upon the LCRR by incorporating additional measures to further protect public health. These improvements will focus on:

- **Stronger requirements for reducing lead exposure:** Specifies that there is no safe level of lead in drinking water. Under the LCRI, the lead action level will be reduced from 15 to 10 parts per billion.
- **Validation by visual inspection of a number of non-lead service lines that were previously identified through non-visual inspection methods,** the total number of required validations is dependent on the total number of non-lead service lines that meet the selection criteria.
- **Requires Lead Service Line Replacements by 2037 for most PWS.**
- **Expanded data collection and reporting:** There will be new requirements for utilities to collect and report more comprehensive data on lead levels, water quality, and the status of lead service line replacements.
- **Increased support for vulnerable populations:** Includes specific provisions for communities at greater risk of lead exposure, ensuring that the most affected populations receive adequate protection.
- **Requires lead testing in schools and early education and care facilities (EECFs):**
 - Beginning in 2027, all PWS will **have to offer** lead testing to at least 20% of the elementary schools and 20% of the childcare facilities in their service area, each year per 5 years, except for those schools and childcare facilities that were either constructed or had full plumbing replacement on or after January 1, 2014 and are not served by a lead service line, galvanized requiring replacement service line, or service line of unknown material.
 - A PWS must offer testing to all eligible facilities within 5 years.
 - The LCRI also includes requirements for pre-sampling notification, results dissemination, and testing of secondary schools upon request.

The goal of school and EECF testing and remediation efforts is to prevent harm to children by decreasing their exposure to lead at schools and EECF through public education and the identification of outlets providing water with elevated levels of lead.

To assist PWS and to expedite and support lead in school testing, MassDEP launched a FREE testing pilot program for PWS that apply and are selected. You can find more information about this program at [Lead and Copper Rule Revisions | Mass.gov](#), and on the story map at [MassDEP-DWP Lead programs](#).

You can also find more information regarding all of the schools and EECF that have participated in our different programs to reduce lead in drinking water at [Water Smart Program Dashboard](#).

What Resources are available?

- [Lead and Copper Rule Revisions | Mass.gov](#)
- [LCRR Implementation Fact Sheet \(pdf\)](#)
- [Infographic: EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Improvements](#)
- [Lead and Copper Rule Improvements | US EPA](#)

- **Technical Assistance and Funding**
 - **Service Line Inventories and Replacement Plans Grant Program:**
MassDEP is accepting Lead Service Line planning grant applications, on a rolling basis, while funding is available. Please find additional grant and loan information [here](#). Eligible activities for these planning programs include:
 - Completing a comprehensive Service Line Inventory for both public and private portions that will be made publicly available.
 - Preparing a Lead Service Line replacement program for the PWS that complies with the LCRR. PWS' lead service line replacement plans need to incorporate the MassDEP public health protection goal by planning to replace all lead service lines in 5 years or as soon as possible.
 - Use of the MassDEP-provided tools will ensure the submission of a service line inventory and lead service line replacement program summary in a digital form acceptable to MassDEP.

 - **0% Interest Loans for LSL Construction Projects**
The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust (the Trust) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) are offering 0% percent interest construction loans for lead service line replacement and planning grants for assisting public water suppliers with completing planning projects for lead service line inventories and replacement programs. For more information see [Lead Service Line Replacement Program | Mass.gov](#)

 - **Assistance for Small Community Water Systems and Non-Transient Non-Community Systems - Lead Service Line Planning Program:** This program is available for PWS serving a population of less than 10,000. MassDEP is using the \$1.3 million of the set-asides from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Lead Service Line Grant to contract with a qualified technical assistance provider to complete eligible planning projects working with the PWS.

Small PWS must notify MassDEP of their interest in this technical assistance and provide an update on how they are preparing for the LCRR requirements by submitting the [MassDEP Service Line Inventory and Lead Service Line Replacement Plan Technical Assistance Survey](#). PWS will be contacted, and technical assistance will be provided virtually or in person, depending on need and resources.

- **Service Line Identification Tools for PWS**

- [Mass Lead Service Line Identification App](#): MassDEP developed a "crowdsourcing application" (hereafter referred to as "the App") to assist both consumers and PWS to identify lead service lines. The App is a web-based tool for consumers to assist in the identification of lead service lines. No downloading of software is required. The App is a collection of Smartsheet forms, sheets, and workflow automations that allow your customers to submit photos of their service line for identification purposes. This can be helpful for PWS in compiling their service line inventories and in prioritizing lead service line replacements. Instructions on how to use the app can found [here](#). *Please note that the request to sign a PWS up for this app must come from PWS staff directly.*

- **Frequently Asked Questions for Consumers, regarding Lead and Copper**

- [MassDEP webpage for Consumers, regarding Lead and Copper questions](#) <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/consumers-frequently-asked-questions-about-the-lcrr-service-line-inventory>.

For any questions about MassDEP and Lead and Copper Rule requirements please email the [MassDEP Drinking Water Program](#) or call 617-292-5770.

Click to visit the EPA's [Lead and Copper Rule Revisions](#) page for more information about the federal law.