



Green Bay Water Utility

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREEN BAY WATER UTILITY TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL DNR FUNDING TO HELP PROPERTY OWNERS PAY FOR PRIVATE LEAD SERVICE REPLACEMENTS

GREEN BAY, Wis. (Jan. 4, 2018) – The Green Bay Water Utility was recently notified it will receive \$300,000 in funding from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Safe Drinking Water Loan Program. These funds will be available to City of Green Bay residents who have private side lead services (lead pipes on their properties) to replace their lead services and are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

This is excellent news to Green Bay residents who have lead pipes on their properties, as a City ordinance requires the replacement of all lead service lines.

The average cost of private side lead service replacements is nearly \$5,000.

The City of Green Bay was the first community to complete a financial assistance agreement with the DNR for this funding, and is among the first to obtain approval for funding in the DNR program's second – and final – year of funding. That makes it all the more urgent that City of Green Bay property owners who have lead services on their properties to take advantage of the funding available. City of Green Bay Ordinance 21.11 requires the replacement of all private-side lead water service lines within and connected to the Green Bay Water Utility (GBWU) system. This ordinance makes it that it is each affected property owner's responsibility to replace any private-side lead service. A private lead service is the section of pipe located between the water meter inside the building and the shut off valve, which is typically located in the terrace."

"The funding is there, but when it's gone, it's gone, and property owners who have private-side lead services will still be held responsible for replacing their lead services by the City," said Nancy Quirk, general manager of the Green Bay Water Utility. "By acting sooner than later, the customers who have lead services on their properties can ensure they benefit from these funds before they're gone."

The Utility has sent multiple letters to all customers who have private side lead services, advising them of the ordinance and the private side lead service replacement funding.

The Utility has communicated with ALL Green Bay residents who have been identified as having private-side lead pipes as well as the approximately 170 properties owners who have properties built prior to 1945 who have not responded to numerous attempts at outreach via multiple letters, phone calls, direct mailers, door hangers and other communication to get into their properties to determine their water service material. The Utility does not have records of the type of material used in the property owner's water service on those 170 or so properties. Accessing those property owners' water services (typically done by looking at the water service line between where it enters the building and where it connects to the water meter in the property owner's basement, crawl space or closet) is only about a five-minute process. This is crucial to not only identifying any remaining lead on the private side. If you received the Green Bay Water Utility letter requesting access and haven't contacted us, please do so at (920) 448-3480. Please note: We have reached out to all property owners with identified lead pipes on their properties, and to all property owners with "unknown" pipe material in their homes. If you haven't received multiple communications from us, you do not need to take any action or contact us.

The process to be eligible for the private-side funding requires property owners with private-side lead services to follow several steps, including securing three quotes for the private side replacement work from three prequalified contractors.

In 2016, the Utility secured \$500,000 through this program as well as an additional \$300,000 from the Green Bay City Council in excess Lambeau Field sales tax funds designed to assist property owners affected by private lead service with the cost of its replacement. To date, 202 private properties have been identified as having private side lead services. Of those, 134 replacements are complete and 23 have signed agreements with preapproved contractors for the replacements. The remaining 45 property owners who have not yet responded can benefit from this program but need to do so quickly before the available funds are used up.

The process to be eligible for the private-side funding requires property owners to follow several steps, including securing three quotes for the private side replacement work from three prequalified contractors. If you've received communication from the Water Utility regarding the private-side lead service replacement program and want to move forward with your replacement, please call Justin at the Water Utility at (920) 785-7904.

"We knew private-side lead service replacement would come at a significant cost. Not only that, we realized it would present a substantial financial hardship to many property owners because many (not all) of the affected properties are located in older and lower-income neighborhoods," said Quirk. "That's why we were so assertive in seeking ways to assist property owners with paying for something so important. I can't urge property owners who have lead services to act sooner than later to secure these funds."

This funding for private-side lead service replacements is a complement to the concerted efforts the Utility has made to replace utility-owned lead service lines as well. The Utility currently has 959 utility-owned lead service lines in its system; the Utility has worked hard to reduce this number from 1,782 in January 2016.

The Utility has made a commitment to “Get the Lead Out” on both the private-side and public side service lines by Dec. 31, 2020.

About the Green Bay Water Utility

For more than 130 years, Green Bay Water Utility has been supplying high-quality drinking water at a reasonable cost to customers in Green Bay and in several surrounding communities. With offices located at 631 S. Adams St. in Green Bay, the Green Bay Water Utility is dedicated to supplying friendly, convenient and dependable service to all customers. For more information, visit gbwater.org.

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