

Appendix 30 – Lead Pipe Replacement Program

Each year, DC Water replaces lead service pipes in conjunction with scheduled infrastructure upgrades. These construction projects include water main replacements, emergency repairs and District Department of Transportation (DDOT) projects. During these projects, DC Water replaces water service lines in public space, including the replacement of any existing lead service pipes. DC Water strongly encourages property owners to take this opportunity to replace the portion of lead pipe on their private property. Prior to construction, homeowners receive information about the possibility of lead in the water, minimizing lead exposure and options for lead service pipe replacement. This information is delivered using a series of communication methods, including mail, phone call reminders and hand-delivered outreach materials.

DC Water also offers a voluntary program to replace lead service pipes in coordination with individual property owners. Property owners suspecting lead service lines may contact DC Water to inquire about material type of the service lines on the public and private property. If a property owner meets specific requirements and agrees to pay for lead service pipe replacement on private property, DC Water will coordinate and replace the portion in public space at the same time.

In FY12, DC Water replaced 215 lead service lines and 135 thus far in FY13.

After a lead pipe replacement, a temporary increase in lead will likely occur in household tap water. Lead levels can potentially remain elevated for a few months after a lead pipe is replaced. This spike in lead is the result of pipes being disturbed during construction.

Following all lead service replacements, DC Water provides customers with a filter and replacement cartridges to minimize lead exposure. DC Water recommends that these households filter their tap water for cooking and drinking for six months. Approximately four to five months after the lead pipe replacement, DC Water provides a free lead test kit and water samples are collected and tested at a certified laboratory. The lead test provides information on lead levels after pipe replacement. We advise that pregnant women and children under age six should use filtered tap water for drinking and cooking until all sources of lead are removed.