



## Community Lead Response Advisory Committee September 24, 2020 Meeting Minutes

### Welcome and Introductions

On Conference Call:

Sarah Stoner  
Gina Miller  
John Coogan  
Kinsey Casey  
Pete Demarco  
Julie Barg  
Dan Duffy  
Mora McLaughlin  
Madeline Weiss  
Sarah Bolenbaugh  
Michael Blackhurst  
Chris Hoover  
Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis

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### LCR Sampling:

- June 2020 sampling showed the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for lead is 5.1 ppb, coming below the action level.
- Second consecutive low sampling event – December 2019 was 10.0 ppb.
- We continue to closely monitor system – still monitoring our pipe loops and many other sampling points throughout distribution system.
  - Want to see effects of different conditions on our lead levels.
- We are still visiting homes where customer request sample results are higher than 15 ppb and try to understand why the levels are high and help reduce levels where possible. Often, we find it is low water usage as the cause of high lead samples.
- Continue profile sampling at select homes.
- After two consecutive 6-month LCR sampling events below the action level, we are back to annual sampling events.
  - We are requesting DEP allow us to modify our pH and ortho levels on our treatment permit. Once optimal levels are reached, we will need to demonstrate compliance through another two 6-month sampling periods.



## 2019 LSLR Program Updates

- Finishing work within three weeks or so.
- Final work orders in the Bluff, Bloomfield, and Central Northside.
  - Bluff work is moving slowly to avoid congesting this smaller residential neighborhood.
- We began work on this program with 10,000 locations
  - Received agreements back from 8,300 locations
  - Approximately 1,100 unresponsive.
    - 589 unresponsive + vacant properties.
  - Worked at 7,995 locations
  - 44% were not found to be public lead after verification.
  - Replaced approximately 4,400 public lead lines
  - Approximately 3,400 private lead lines.
  - Remaining work will exceed 4,500 public service line replacements at end of contract.
  - 38 partial replacements.
  - On initial PENNVEST submittal, had anticipated only working at 7,000 houses and replacing 2,800 public/2,400 private. Replaced almost twice what was originally anticipated.

## SDWMR 2020 Construction

- Work started in June 2020
- Anticipate replacing over 2,000 public service lines
- Work is going well/on schedule
- Agreements returned/not required: 63%
- Unresponsive: 37%
- 28% locations verified, 73% found to be non-lead.
- \*2 partial replacement
  - \*one site private side material not able to be confirmed, we tied back into copper before the curb box to be safe, but we are listing as partial.

## SDWMR 2021 Preparation

- Areas under design for construction next year
- Requesting deadline extension to December 31 (previously September 30) for submittal of 2022 SDWMR areas.
- Update will be provided at our next Compliance Plan Progress Report.

## Overall LSLR Status

- Approximately 7,800 public replacements since 2016
- Approximately 4,900 private side replacements.



- Approximately 5,700 verified non-lead public
- Approximately 7,000 verified non lead private
- Opt out status (2019 LSLR):
  - Over 300 total opt-outs
  - 98 have opted back in after call from Lead Help
  - At sites where they claim there is no lead on private side, we are still proceeding with a verification. If lead is found, we reach back out to get them to opt in.
    - Majority of people do opt in.
  - PWSA Opt-Out
    - No PWSA opt-outs for several months.
    - Structural or sanitary reasons: 73 total, 50 of which are City owned

## Outreach:

- Some canvassing still occurring in 2019 active areas.
- For 2020 work, strategic canvassing occurring at sites with verified private lead. Between 2-6 weeks between verification and connection to convince homeowners to opt in.

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## PUC Update - Terminations

- Organized two workshops in August and September. Items discussed include:
  - Customers without legal authority to sign agreement (tangled titles) – PWSA will accept liability for doing these locations without an owner agreement – PENNVEST continues to not allow the use of their funds at these properties.
- Allow exception for termination:
  - Customer costs would be burdensome (restoration work or safety concerns)
- Emergency replacements when authorization cannot be obtained.
- Concern expressed regarding winter moratorium and COVID-19 shut off moratorium.
- PUC did not allow us any exceptions.
- Asked PWSA to work with intervenors to map out a termination process and help avoid terminations wherever possible.
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- Now submitting report to PUC by September 30<sup>th</sup> with comment periods.
- Have resolved termination procedure, tangled titles, concerns about service lines crossing multiple properties, procedure for other moratorium situations.
  - Sites where service lines cross another property – PWSA has the authority to terminate water at both locations.
- Property Opt-Out Due to Cost
  - PWSA has never opted out due to cost – always due to sanitary or safety issues. Always pass information to customer to connect with United Way to assist.
  - Cost for restoration can be extensive for some customers – retaining walls, hillsides, etc.



- PUC Complaint Process
  - Process can take multiple months. Our construction schedule will move faster than this, could potentially put hold on entire construction process (water main installation, street restoration)
  - Would be inconvenient to all customers impacted by work, not just individual filing PUC Complaint.
  - Would also be costly to delay construction contract.
  - We have requested that there would be a separate complaint channel for these issues – 1 week or less, similar to non-payment shut off process after customer has been terminated.

**Madeline Weiss: What are “security issues” for PWSA opt outs?**

- **Sites where plumbing, electric, structure has been stripped out – clear signs that work will be vandalized after it is completed. We do not want to add new piping, expansion tanks, etc. then have it subject to vandalism. We require the customer to demonstrate that the building is secure before we will conduct our work.**

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## CEP Update

- Total customers interested: 3,557
- Income verified: 1,037
- Total agreements signed: 652
- Locations verified: 527
- Locations with non-lead both sides: 231
- Private side replaced: 269
- Public side replaced: 403
- CEP funding spent: \$1,098,462.50
- PWSA funds spent: \$1,643,499.38
- Have switched out contractor who was underperforming.
- Working our way through backlog, which will generally increase spending.
- DEP has given us 3-month extension – now working against a February 2021 deadline to use funds.
- Sent out mailer to 2,000 locations with identified private lead.
- Second mailer going out soon – approx. 500 locations discovered through our programs from June-August.
- Once per month, we re-contact locations where residents have verified income but have not signed agreement. New agreement left at home + robocall sent to encourage them to sign agreement.
- Social media posts continue.



## General Updates

- PUC settlement requirements will be distributed after meeting.
- Web map continues to be updated monthly.
- PWSA has suspended pitcher and filter offer to CAP customers after second round of low LCR sampling, per settlement agreement.
  - We are still providing pitcher and filter to sites where sample exceeds 10 ppb.

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## LSLR Reimbursement Program

- Income based – anyone 300% FPL will get 100% reimbursement of eligible costs – same format as other LSLR work: will not pay for restoration costs, only cost to replace pipe.
  - Until February 2021, we will continue to funnel those under 300% FPL to CEP program until funds run out.
- Tiered reimbursement up to 500 % FPL - >500% FPL will only receive \$1,000 stipend.
- Available to tenant and homeowners, although homeowner must sign off on work.
- Dollar Energy will administer income verification.
- PWSA will inform customer of reimbursement level, estimate form for plumber, list of participating plumbers identified by PWSA, list of general responsibilities.
- Customer will submit estimate to PWSA for approval.
- After work is completed by private plumber, PWSA to write check to customer and “Participating Plumber”. Plumber can only charge customer for non-eligible costs like restoration.
  - If customer uses other plumber, we will not co-write check.
- Hosted outreach sessions with plumbers after mailing County list of over 2,000 licensed plumbers.
  - Some concern expressed about payment terms being split between PWSA costs and theirs. Reassured that cowritten check will be secured and issued with 2-4 weeks.
- Internal procedures and communication materials are prepared. Training internal staff to handle requests.
- Will roll out October 1 – will send press release and other outreach.
  - We will directly reach out to parties who have expressed an interest since the Board policy was adopted in July 2019.
- Focus of program: Those interested in replacing lead service line but don’t want to wait until we reach them in a few years.

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## Update – ACHD Inspections

- Two ACHD Plumbing Inspectors arrested for falsifying records. PWSA site mentioned in Post-Gazette article two weeks ago.



- PWSA conducts its own inspections of all work through contracted firm, independent of ACHD inspection. Use tablet app to collect extensive photos and notes at every location we do work.
- We ensure our contractor obtains permit from ACHD and final inspection after work is complete. We document the inspection and permit. We have provided DEP with all documentation at sites of concern.
- We will cooperate with all appropriate authorities.

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## Inventory Update

- Submittal due to DEP at end of 2020
- Originally intended to use CBI inventory, but found that results were useful for identifying lead, but not accurate in identifying non-lead if curb box was historically replaced. At these sites, a dig-verification is needed.
- Presented a revised inventory approach to DEP in July 2019.
  - Meter replacements recording private-side materials. Program halted during early phase of COVID-19, but crews are back to work in limited capacity.
  - Continued LSLR and SDWMR verification and replacement data
  - University of Pittsburgh Machine-Learning Predictive Model results received.
  - 2020 Curb Box Inspection Program
  - Continued data mining using PWSA, City of Pittsburgh, ACHD records.

## Curb Box Inspection Program

- Required to submit results to customer within 90 days of inspection and no later than 120 days after the inspection per settlement – have been to send letters out within 90 days.
- First 4/6 work order areas have results letters mailed.
- Awaiting data for last two work orders to mail results, will be sent late October-early November.

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## Housekeeping

- Dan Duffy suggests early December date for next meeting.
- Topics:
  - Final 2019 LSLR stats
  - Update on 2020 SDWMR
  - Initial results from new Reimbursement Program
  - Final PUC order



- Other standard updates

**Gina Miller:** Thank you to your team for your efforts, there has been so much progress on this program since we began meeting in 2018.

- **Duffy:** Thank you, we appreciate the acknowledgement.

**Pete Demarco:** When customer opts out of SDWMR due to costs of restoration, will there be any research done into the exact costs they may incur, their income, etc.?

- **Duffy:** Usually, what they are worried about is visible – retaining wall, expensive landscaping work.
- May be good for us to set up criteria, if customer is concerned about costs. Would investigate whether or not it is a low-income situation or something else. Could inform how we proceed to convince them/help them.