



Erie Water Works (EWW)

Service Line Replacement Project – Phase 4

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Answers

Q1. Why will the water service line be replaced for my home or business?

- A1. The water delivered to your home or business is lead-free and virus-free. The purpose of the project is to remove lead goosenecks that were installed in the past as part of the provision of water service. Some older water service connections that were made before 1940 utilized a small 1-2 foot section of lead pipe to connect to wrought iron service lines, which are rigid and unable to bend. Lead in any quantity can be detrimental to human health. Although EWW has a very effective corrosion control treatment program that protects against any lead leaching from the piping into the water, EWW's goal is to remove all lead piping from the water system.



If your private water service line consists of wrought iron or galvanized pipe it will also be replaced into the structure up to and including the water meter **at no cost to the property owner**. If your private water service line consists of copper pipe it will be left in place and the new public water service connection will be reconnected near the property line with a new curb valve. In order to determine the specific material and configuration of the private water service line it will be necessary for representatives of the Contractor, Chivers Construction, and their subcontracted licensed plumbing professional, Wm. T. Spaeder Company, to gain access to the residence or business. The Contractor will coordinate this process directly with residents and property owners.

Q2. When will construction start? How long will the project take to complete?

- A2. The construction work was publicly bid in February 2024 and awarded to Chivers Construction of Erie, PA. Approximately 2,350 properties in the City of Erie will be addressed. The project will begin in June of 2024. Construction for the overall project will last up to three years with a mandatory shut down of construction between December and February of each year. This is to allow for proper snow removal during the winter months and because asphalt restoration cannot occur during that time as the asphalt plants will be closed for the season. The work affecting water service to your business or residence should only last 4-8 hours. Work in 2024 will include preliminary investigations to prepare for service line renewals, and the removal of inactive



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connections. Construction efforts for service line renewals will begin in spring of 2025 and will continue into the spring of 2027.

Q3. Will access to businesses and residences be maintained during the project?

A3. All reasonable efforts will be made to avoid any lengthy interruptions in access to businesses during normal operating hours. The Contractor will attempt to coordinate with property owners and residents in advance to maintain access to private driveways as much as possible. If parked along the street, you may be asked to move your vehicle to help facilitate the work.

Q4. How will traffic on my road be effected?

A4. The Contractor will attempt to leave one lane of traffic open throughout construction. Roads may be temporarily closed to through traffic in some instances; however, the Contractor will work with residents and those needing access for emergency purposes. The Contractor is required to provide flaggers, traffic signs, etc. as needed according to the requirements for traffic control.

Q5. How long will my water service be interrupted?

A5. As a water service connection or line is replaced, your water service will have to be shut off temporarily. Barring any unexpected complications, the interruption in water service should only last 4-8 hours. The Contractor and EWW's on-site project representative will attempt to coordinate with property owners to minimize the inconvenience of this temporary interruption.

Q6. What work will need to take place inside of my home or business?

A6. The preliminary investigation work in 2024 will allow EWW and the Contractor to determine if the private water service line will need to be replaced. The Contractor will reach out directly to coordinate this process with residents and property owners. The preliminary work will involve review and documentation of the existing service line where it enters into the building, and where the existing water meter is located.

If your private water service line consists of wrought iron or galvanized pipe it will also be replaced into the structure up to and including a new shut off valve, water meter, dual check backflow preventer, and thermal expansion tank **at no cost to the property owner**. *This represents a significant investment for your property, as the cost of replacing a water service line can often exceed \$4,000.* Replacements of wrought iron or galvanized private water service lines will not begin until spring of 2025, however the investigation work in 2024 is an important and



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necessary step that will enable the Contractor to plan accordingly, obtain materials, and finalize the construction schedule. If your private water service line is to be replaced, it will also be necessary to grant EWW a temporary easement for the duration of the project. If an easement is needed, additional information will be sent after the preliminary investigation work.

Q7. What happens after the Contractor reconnects the new water service line?

A7. It is required that the Contractor flush the water service for at least 30 minutes from an exterior spigot at the home or business. We ask that you allow for this to occur. Additionally, flushing inside of the building or home should occur. It is preferred that you flush from a bath tub or sink that does not have an aerator. Aerators should be removed from faucets and cleaned. A \$10 flushing credit will appear on your water bill to account for the recommended flushing. As an extra precaution, residents will also be provided with a free pitcher filter that is certified to remove lead. You will also be given the opportunity to voluntarily have the water tested at no expense. *Additional guidance on flushing, filters, and testing will be provided to property owners at the time of individual service line renewals.*

Q8. Will all landscaping be restored after completion of the project? What about paved areas (i.e., sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, etc.)?

A8. Landscaping impacted by construction will be restored to a similar condition as existed prior to construction. This applies to lawn/grass, as well as concrete and asphalt surfaces. Trees and shrubs will only be trimmed or removed if necessary. In some cases trees and shrubs can be temporarily removed and replanted, or replaced with similar nursery stock.

Q9. If my property has more than one meter per water service connection, how many meters will the contractor reinstall?

A9. Properties with two or more existing meters and that would like to retain two or more meters will be required to sign a sub-metering agreement and pay both the EWW Customer Service Charge and the City of Erie Sewer Customer Service Charge for each meter in the future each quarter. The EWW Customer Service Charge, which has been in place since 1992, represents the cost of meter reading, meter maintenance, billing, mailing, and payment collection and processing. EWW Rules & Regulations state that all costs associated with the installation and maintenance of subsidiary meters will be the responsibility of the property owner. If not already paying a customer service charge for each meter, only one meter will be installed per active customer account. The property owner will have to hire and pay for the services of a licensed



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master plumber to perform the plumbing changes necessary, per the agreement. A copy of the sub-metering agreement can be obtained by contacting EWW's Customer Service Department.

Q10. Are there helpful sources I can use to find more information about lead in drinking water?

A10. United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP)

<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/PublicDrinkingWater/Pages/Lead-in-Drinking-Water.aspx>

National Lead Information Center, (800) 424-LEAD

EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline, (800) 426-4791