

January 2024

The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Portage - Water Department

Newsletter

Swiftreach Program

In order to keep our emergency system updated, the Water Authority is asking customers to update their account with current phone numbers and email addresses. By doing this, automated calls to customers in an emergency situation will be handled more efficiently. Please contact our office or email us at pwauth@portagewater.com

Water Leak Adjustments

The Portage Water Authority allows one leak adjustment per customer in a period of thirty-six (36) months. A request for adjustment must be completed and submitted within sixty (60) days from the date the leak was discovered. The leak must also be repaired before consideration of your request can be presented to The Water Authority Board.

The policy of the Authority is situations involving severe leaks at a cost of \$100 or more (for water portion of bill) which may occur and are beyond the control of the responsible water customer, may result in an adjustment being granted.

Leak adjustments shall be adjusted as follows: Total water amount billed less average multiplied by 50% plus average usage. (Average usage is calculated by the past 12 months or available history)

The Water Authority has the right to approve or reject any request for adjustment.



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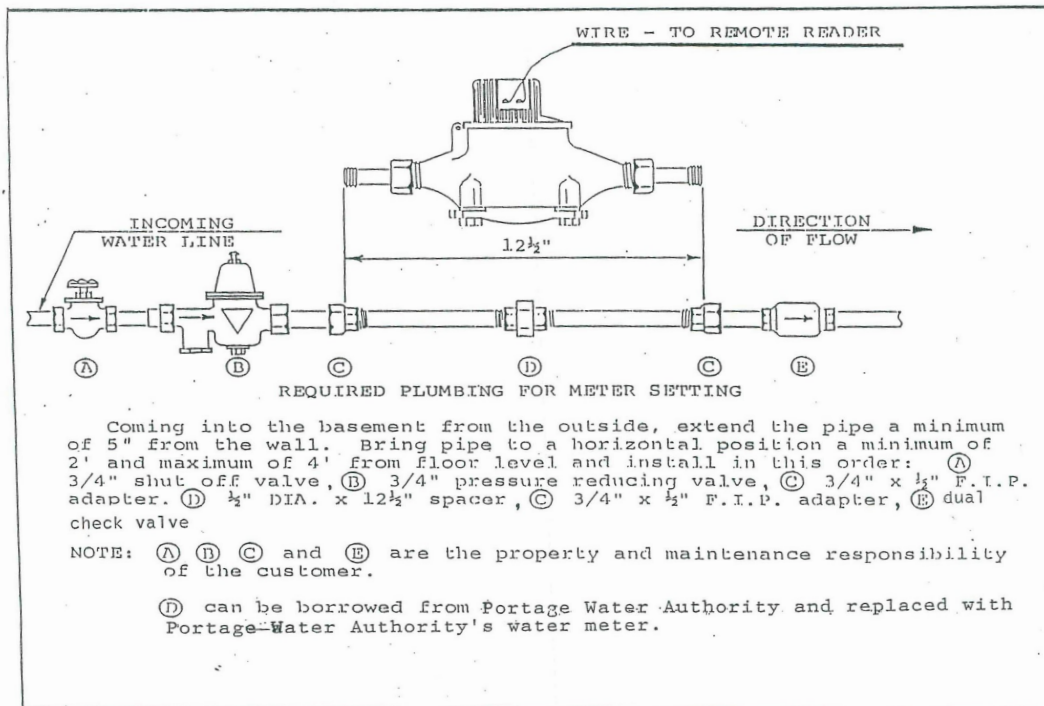
Office Hours

Our office hours are 8am to 4pm Monday thru Friday. The drop box is always available, it is located beside the entrance door.

Backflow Prevention Requirements

Protecting your drinking water supply is everyone's responsibility. State regulations require residential, commercial and industrial customers served by a public water system to protect the public water system from potential contamination. Under certain

conditions water from private plumbing can flow into the public water distribution system, this is referred to as backflow. In order to prevent potential backflow, customers are required to install and maintain backflow prevention devices on the



Automatic Cash Transfer

Sign up today! The Water Authority has Automatic Cash Transfer. No more writing checks or rushing in to pay your bill on time. We will automatically deduct your billed amount from your account. Stop in or call today to sign up.

Credit Card Payments

Now accepting credit cards as a form of payment. Pay online through the Water Authority's secure website at www.portagewater.com or by stopping in or calling the office.

(A small usage fee of \$3.00 will apply)



Martindale 12" Steel Pipe

Website

Check out our website www.portagewater.com for important information. You can find our office hours, phone numbers, board members, staff, rates, minutes, water quality reports, meeting dates, automatic cash, transfer application form, online bill payment and more. Also important information is printed on your bill for example flushing dates, new office hours, etc.

Payment Due Date

Bills. Are due the 15th of each month. A penalty will be applied after this date which may result in a delinquent notice.



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Portage -
Water Department
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Complete The Survey For A Chance To WIN \$100 Credit On Your Account

Lead Service Line Inventory

In 2022, the United States Congress approved changes to the Lead and Copper Rule. This law now mandates that public water systems, like The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Portage (MABP), must generate a Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI) and provide it to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PaDEP). The ruling necessitates that information must be collected from each account, including those not currently in use. For each additional account, a separate survey must be filled out. Simply complete a survey for each tap account you have and be automatically entered for a chance to win up to \$500 of water bill credits.

Here's how it works. Every month until July 31, 2024, one returned LSLI surveys will be selected to receive a \$100 water bill credit. If you have multiple accounts, each completed survey will be an individual entry. Other than removing the winners, entries for the monthly draw will remain eligible to win for the entire duration of the campaign. Please take the time to complete the survey either by scanning the QR code or visiting our website. Collection of this information is required by the PaDEP. MABP will follow-up with customer accounts that do not complete the survey. We appreciate your cooperation as quality water is essential at every faucet.

Why Does the Lead Survey Matter?

In order to effectively combat water contamination, the lead service line survey has been designed to identify the locations of lead service lines. It is widely known that lead can be hazardous to human health, particularly for children, and thus extensive efforts have been undertaken to reduce exposure through drinking water. Usually, lead finds its way into the drinking water when it leaches out of plumbing materials made of lead after leaving the water treatment plant. To minimize lead levels in public drinking water supplies, controlling the corrosion of plumbing and pipes has been the most common practice. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) has utilized multiple tactics to limit lead in drinking water, such as limiting lead content of pipes and fixtures, requiring public education and notification, authorizing the EPA to oversee the regulation of contaminants in public water supplies, and permitting grants to be distributed for lead reduction projects, lead testing in schools and childcare centers, and the removal of lead-lined water coolers from schools. In that effort, MABP needs to know if lead service lines exist in its service area. If you are a MABP customer – please take the time to fill one out for each of your accounts.



Lead Service Line Inventory Frequently Asked Questions

A Lead Service Line Inventory is a requirement of the EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR).

Why are lead service lines a concern?

Service lines are pipes that connect individual buildings, like homes, to a water system. These service lines deliver drinking water to your tap. Millions of homes across the United States have service lines made of lead, a toxic metal that is especially dangerous to young developing brains. The only long-term solution to protect public health is to remove these lead service lines.

How does lead get into drinking water?

Lead can enter drinking water when plumbing materials that contain lead corrode, especially when the water has high acidity or low mineral content. In homes with lead pipes that connect the home to the water main, also known as lead service lines, these pipes are typically the most significant source of lead in the water.

Is there lead in The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Portage water?

Drinking water that leaves the Martindale Treatment Plant, and the Bens creek Water Treatment Plant do not contain lead. Potential lead levels in drinking water are linked to homes constructed, typically before the 1991, with a lead service line or fixtures. However, EPA recommends lead levels of 0 mg/L as a goal, and this goal may not be obtainable if you have a lead service line in your home.

Why is a Lead Service Line Inventory necessary?

Changes made to the Lead and Copper Rule, passed by the United States Congress in 2022, requires all public water systems to complete a Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI), on ALL service lines in the system, and submit this information to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection – The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Portage (MABP) must identify all service lines, regardless of usage. Standard accounts, municipal connections, and vacant tap services all must be inventoried. Lead service lines may exist in private homes and fixtures beyond the connection to the MABP.

What requirements in EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR) rule do water systems need to comply with?

All community and non-transient non-community water systems must develop an initial inventory of service lines that meets the LCRR requirements, including service line materials classification and information sources, for both the public and the private portions of every service line, and submit their lead service line inventories to the state by October 16, 2024. The rule requires MABP to collect material data on both the water-system-owned portion of the service line (water main to the curb box) and the customer-owned portion of the service line (curb box to the building inlet).

What is the LCRR definition of a lead service line and galvanized line?

Lead Service Line means a portion of pipe that is made of lead, which connects the water main to the building inlet. A lead service line may be owned by the water system, owned by the property owner, or both. Galvanized Service Line means iron or steel piping that has been dipped in zinc to prevent corrosion and rusting. A galvanized service line is considered a lead service line if it ever was or is currently downstream of any lead service line or service line of unknown material.

How does MABP access information regarding the private/customer owned service line?

MABP has developed a Lead Service Line Inventory Survey to enable MABP customers to participate in the collection of the data required by the EPA LCRR. If surveys are not completed, or if materials within the customers home are identified as 'unknown', further communication and verification will be required to determine the type of material. Identification of materials can be done through historic records, date of construction, and visual inspections.

What information does a water system need to share with its customers?

All water systems must make information available upon request for each service customer. All water systems are required to notify all customers served by lead service lines or lead status unknown service lines within 30 days of completion of the inventory. Lead status unknown lines are treated as lead service lines in the LCRR until identified. Annual public notification to each customer with an unknown service line is required.

Are consecutive systems required to do a lead service line inventory?

Yes. Each community and non-transient non-community water system is responsible for the completion of a lead service line inventory. Learn about the water coming into your home. EPA requires all community water systems to prepare and deliver an annual water quality report called a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) for their customers by July 1 of each year. MABP prepares CCR's for each of the public water systems served. These reports can be viewed on our website. <https://portagewater.com/water-quality-report>

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Portage (MABP), located at 606 Cambria Street, Portage PA received Notice of Violation (NOV) letters. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the allotted time allowed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) to remedy the violations has expired, thus having the Department issuing another NOV. The violations are non-emergency violations and you are not required to change to an alternative source of water. The violations effect all customers within the Authority's system. Please read the NOTICE OF VIOLATION below for more information.

From the **NOTICE OF VIOLATION** letter dated September 15, 2022 (issuing a Tier 2 Public Notice)

Between December 20, 2021 and May 10, 2022, the Department notified that the following violation(s) meet the definition of a **significant deficiency**:

The improper placement of the Combined Filter Effluent turbidimeter at the Martindale and Benscreek water treatment plants in violation of 25 Pa. Code §§ 109.4(3) and 109.303(b) as noted in the December 20, 2021, and May 10, 2022 Notices of Violation (NOVs), respectively.

Not having the appropriate capabilities for automatic shutdown at the Martindale and Benscreek water treatment plants in accordance with 25 Pa. Code §§ 109.602(b) and 109.4 as noted in the February 17, 2022 NOV.

25 Pa. Code § 109.717(4) requires that a "public water supplier shall correct significant deficiencies identified within 120 days of receiving written notification from the Department... or according to the schedule approved by the Department."

The significant deficiencies cited in the December 20, 2021 and February 17, 2022 NOVs were required to be corrected no later than April 19, 2022 and June 17, 2022, respectively, without an alternate schedule approved by the Department. On April 12, 2022, Portage submitted a request to extend the deadlines to provide an additional 60 days for each violation, which was approved by the Department on April 18, 2022 (with corrections on May 24, 2022) to extend these deadlines to June 27, 2022 and August 18, 2022, respectively. On June 24, 2022 the Department received an additional written request for additional extensions of these deadlines. The Department granted Portage's requests to extend these deadlines to on or before September 1, 2022. The deficiencies have not been corrected to date, but MABP has outlined its plans of correcting the issue with PADEP.

The significant deficiencies at the Benscreek water treatment plant were required to be corrected no later than September 07, 2022. The deficiencies have not been corrected to date, but MABP has discussed with PADEP options for correcting the deficiencies.

Each failure to correct a significant deficiency by the aforementioned deadlines constitutes a violation of Section 109.717(4). To assure your system is in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements, the Department requires that MABP complete the following:

1. Issue a Tier 2 public notice within thirty (30) days of receipt of this Notice. Public Notice should be issued in accordance with Sections 109.407, 109.409 and 109.411.
2. Submit a certification that the public notification requirements have been fulfilled and a copy of the notice to this office within ten (10) days of issuing the public notice in accordance with 40 CFR 141.31(d) and Section 109.701(a)(4) of Title 25 of the Pennsylvania Code.

For more information, or to learn more about protecting your drinking water please contact Mr. Chuck Gouse (interim superintendent) at (814)-736-9642.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This is being sent by the Municipal Authority of the Borough of Portage. PWSID# 4110027. This notice will be sent every three (3) months until the violation(s) or situations are resolved. The time to remedy this will be dependent upon the scope of work needed to resolve the violation; i.e. are new plants and tanks required or are modifications to the existing plants satisfactory. Although deadlines were not met, MABP was in constant consultation with PADEP to develop a corrective action plan.

The MABP and its staff would like to thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue working with the PADEP to make decisions pertaining to the upgrades necessary to address the issues presented above.

