

CURRENTS

MAYOR PEDUTO JOINS PWSA TO ANNOUNCE LOWER LEAD LEVELS IN PITTSBURGH

Latest round of compliance testing results are the lowest in over 20 years.



PWSA Executive Director Will Pickering (front) and Mayor William Peduto (back) at July 22 press conference.

On Wednesday, July 22 Mayor Peduto and PWSA hosted a joint press conference to announce that our most recent round of regulatory compliance testing resulted in a 90th percentile lead level of 5.1 parts per billion (ppb).

Samples collected from 158 homes with lead service lines or plumbing are the lowest levels in recent history, demonstrating the effectiveness of adding orthophosphate to PWSA's water treatment process.

The 90th percentile result of 5.1 ppb is approximately 10 ppb below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) lead action level of 15 ppb. This is PWSA's lowest lead testing result in over 20 years and the second consecutive round of testing below the action level. The results indicate that we are effectively reducing lead levels across our water service area.

In April 2019, we began adding orthophosphate to reduce lead levels in drinking water while continuing to replace thousands of lead service lines. Orthophosphate is a food-grade additive that forms a protective layer inside of lead service lines, creating a barrier between the lead pipes and the water flowing through them. It is approved by the EPA and successfully used in water systems across the world. Orthophosphate was selected by PWSA and approved by DEP after an extensive, year-long study of treatment alternatives.

To better understand and implement orthophosphate in the system, we assembled an experienced team of staff, as well as external water quality scientists and state and federal regulators. This group monitors hundreds of additional samples in addition to the compliance testing announced today to ensure that orthophosphate remains effective.

"This latest round of testing brings us back into compliance with state and federal regulations, and closes an unfortunate chapter in PWSA's history," said PWSA Executive Director, Will Pickering. "Ensuring the safety of your water is our number one priority. We're aiming to restore our customers' trust by continuing to optimize water treatment and replacing the remaining lead pipes in our system."

With two consecutive rounds of testing below state and federal action levels, we are no longer required by law to replace seven percent of the lead service lines in our system each year. We will however continue to conduct aggressive water quality testing and work towards replacing all lead service lines by 2026.

More information about our Community Lead Response and orthophosphate is available at lead.pgh2o.com.



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COMING UP:

2020 Board Meetings

August 21
September 25
October 23
November 20
December 18

Meetings begin at 10:00am and are open to the public. Due to COVID-19, meetings will be held via teleconference until further notice. Visit pgh2o.com/events-meetings for the most updated information.

Wightman Park Phase II Community Meeting

August 5
Virtual meeting; 6:30 - 8:00pm

Due to restrictions on events from COVID-19, meetings may be tentative or postponed. For the most updated information, please visit our website at pgh2o.com/events-meetings

Consecutive rounds of regulatory lead compliance testing from 2016 to 2020. With the addition of orthophosphate in April of 2019, we are seeing a consistent reduction in lead levels.

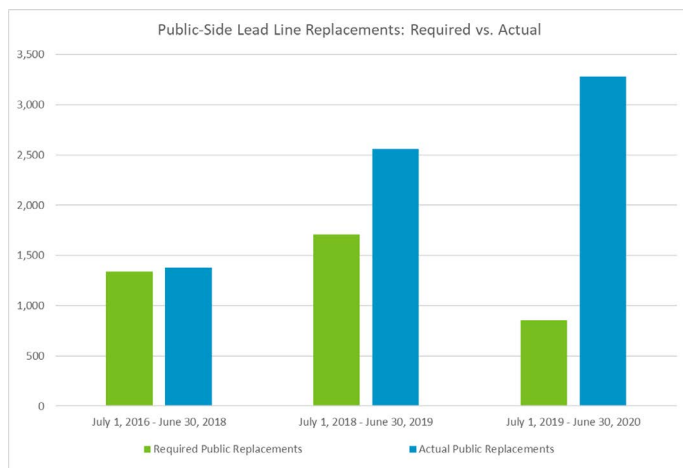
DIRECTOR'S CUT

By Executive Director Will Pickering

An eye toward the future

July 2020 will be one for the PWSA record books. For the first time since June 2016, our drinking water complies with state and federal regulations for lead in water. Our multi-year effort to improve our drinking water treatment to protect against corrosion from lead pipes has proven to become more effective over time and our levels are comparable to other cities across the country. We're also continuing to address lead in water by aggressively removing the remaining lead service lines from our system.

Earlier this month, we announced that we surpassed the required number of lead line replacements by 3,316 public service lines. Even though our improved lead test results mean that we will no longer be required to replace lead service lines each year, we will continue toward our goal of replacing all of them by 2026.



Despite initial missteps, we now have a Community Lead Response program that is a model for cities across the country. Our progress is a product of collaboration with state and local leaders who amended law to allow for private lead line replacements and helped us tap state financial resources to support this enormous undertaking. We also benefited from the direction provided by a board of directors who appropriately prioritized addressing lead in water and the leadership of our former Executive Director Bob Weimar. Most importantly, we couldn't have made this progress without the support from our customers who have seen significant rate increases in the past few years.



We are well on our way to fully tackling lead in water, but there is still much work to do. We will continue to remove lead lines in conjunction with water main replacements across the city. While this work takes place, we will also turn our attention to several once-in-a-generation infrastructure improvements that will strengthen our water distribution system.

These projects include rehabilitating water storage facilities and pump stations, updating electrical and backup power systems, and repairing or replacing various large-diameter water mains throughout the system. Over the next few years, we will invest approximately \$312 million to add needed redundancy to our water infrastructure and provide customers with more reliable and secure water services.

In 2020, PWSA is a different organization than it was four years ago. We have recruited a qualified team dedicated to providing safe and reliable services. We are focused on meeting or exceeding regulatory standards and with improvements to customer service, communications, and better use of technology, we are more responsive to the needs of customers.

I want to thank you for your patience as we worked to close this unfortunate chapter in PWSA's history. We now must work on rebuilding your trust. This too will take time, but I hope that these recent accomplishments show that we are doing everything we can to prioritize your health, safety, and improve the delivery of reliable water services.

“We are well on our way to fully tackling lead in water, but there is still much work to do. We will continue to remove lead lines in conjunction with water main replacements across the city.”

Assistance Programs Are Top of Mind for Many Customers

This is a uniquely difficult time for many Pittsburgh residents. We appreciate that so many customers and stakeholders took the time to share their concerns at the public hearings held by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) in early July.

The PUC held six consecutive public hearings to provide customers with an opportunity to share their thoughts about the rate proposal filed by the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) on March 6, 2020.

The hearings were held at 1:00 pm and 6:00 pm on July 7th, 8th, and 9th where thirty-one people, most customers, testified in a format to meet all social distancing requirements. Their comments were heard by members of the PUC and other state departments as well as representatives from PWSA.

Most speakers are concerned that the downturn in the economy and the increasing unemployment rate due to COVID-19 make the timing of a rate increase difficult to bear. Many speakers also expressed an interest in seeing more customer assistance programs available to provide greater protections for our most vulnerable customers.

Your testimony is on record with the PUC and it will be considered while they continue to deliberate on our rate filing.

PWSA is making every reasonable effort to provide customers with the support they need to pay their water and sewer bill.

Our proposal includes a more generous bill discount program, expands awareness about our customer assistance programs through outreach and education, and includes other provisions that will



make it easy for customers to qualify for customer assistance. If the PUC approves our proposal, income eligible households will receive a 100 percent reduction in monthly fixed charges and we will also establish a PWSA staff team that can work one-on-one with financially vulnerable customers.

We currently offer the following Customer Assistance Programs:

- Bill Discount Program that provides a 75 percent reduction on fixed monthly charges.
- Cash assistance grants up to \$300 per year for customers at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Suspension on water shutoffs for customers at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level. This program is typically in place from December 1st through March 31st, but due to COVID-19, has been extended.
- Free private lead line replacements for customers at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Payment plans are available for those that need help paying down past balances.

To make it easier for customers to apply, many of the requirements for these programs have been waived. Our rate proposal includes several recommendations to expand our Customer Assistance Programs.

Customers facing an unexpected financial hardship are encouraged to contact Customer Service by calling (412) 255-2423 and press 5 to learn if these programs can help.



PWSA IN THE COMMUNITY

Due to restrictions on events from COVID-19, in-person meetings have been suspended to protect public health.

South Side Slopes Water Main Replacement Project Meeting
July 2

Virtual meeting

PA Public Utilities Commission Public Hearings

July 7, 8, & 9

Virtual meeting

Allegheny City Central Association Community Meeting

July 13

Virtual meeting

Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, Homewood Water Main Replacement Project Meeting

July 30

Virtual meeting

To schedule a future presentation in your community, go to:
pgh2o.com/request-us-event

PWSA Launches Updated Monthly Utility Bill

With new bill design, improvements make account and usage information easier to understand.



Last month, the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) unveiled a new bill design to help customers better understand their account and how service charges are calculated.

Some of the important changes include an easy to read summary of charges, as well as meter readings and water usage showing the total gallons used per month and average gallons used per day. With these improvements, our goal is to help customers learn more about their monthly water and wastewater costs and better track their water usage.

To walk customers through the features of the new bill, we created an informative new video that highlights current charges and water usage, provides information about water meters, and includes helpful tips on detecting a leak using water meter readings. To understand your water bill and to check out the video, please visit pgh2o.com/UnderstandingYourBill.

“We understand that interpreting a utility bill can be confusing. Understanding water usage and how to read a meter can help customers be more aware and save money in the

long run,” said Executive Director, Will Pickering.

We also encourage customers to use our online [Customer Usage Portal](http://pgh2o.com/CustomerUsagePortal), which is a free tool that tracks real-time water usage and sends alerts when there is a spike in consumption. Setting usage alerts can help customers detect and avoid costly water leaks on their property.

To learn more about water conservation and informative tips to save money on your water bill, please visit our website at pgh2o.com/WaterConservation.

“Understanding water usage and how to read a meter can help customers be more aware and save money in the long run.”

PWSA Executive Director,
Will Pickering



Media and Press Releases

MEDIA COVERAGE

One Water Leadership Insights, US Water Alliance

Despite a dry start to summer, water authorities confident in local supply levels, TribLive

PWSA: Lead levels are greatly reduced in Pittsburgh’s water supply, Post-Gazette

Lead levels in Pittsburgh water lowest in recent history, WPXI

PRESS RELEASES

PWSA Makes Progress on Critical Chlorination Storage System, July 8

PWSA Reaches Agreement with Attorney General Shapiro’s Office, July 16

Highland Park Microfiltration Plant to Reopen This Week, July 20

PWSA Continues Industry-Leading Lead Line Replacement Program, July 21

PWSA’s Lead Levels Lowest in Over 20 Years, July 22

PWSA Postpones Start of Microfiltration Plant in Highland Park, July 25

Employee Spotlight

PWSA's 24/7 Dispatch Team ensures that we are always available to attend to any issue

Our 24/7 Dispatch Team includes: Tyrone Williams, Mark Madero, Shannon Deasy, Melissa Pail, Amber Smith, and Deborah Kenney. They operate on a schedule that allows us to respond to issues around the clock, including all holidays. These include water or sewer main breaks, water pressure difficulties, sewer backups, broken or clogged storm drains, and others. No matter which time of day a customer calls, a dispatcher is always available to assist by logging details about the emergency and relaying critical information to the appropriate field staff.

Like the rest of our non-field staff, Dispatch is staying safe by fulfilling these duties from home.

"Adapting to working from home wasn't really hard for me," said Dispatcher Amber Smith. "I think that it was harder for my family to get used to having to watch their volume levels during work hours"

Dispatcher Mark Madero said, "There is really no difference, except for no other employees around you."

Thanks to support from our Management Information Systems (MIS) Department with their work from home

setups, Dispatch remains equipped to deliver quality service until they can return to their normal office environment.

Dispatcher Deborah Kenney enjoys playing a role in the resolution of a wide variety of issues that arise at any given moment.

"Being a dispatcher, you deal with constant changes and multiple problems to solve," she said. In the same vein, Dispatcher Amber Smith said, "My favorite challenge is being able to keep up with the fast pace and adapting to the demands that come with the day."

According to Dispatcher Mark Madero, one of his favorite challenges is to keep PWSA colleagues informed about emergencies, a critical step to ensure the accuracy of the information we provide to the public.

We are proud of Dispatch's ability to process a large volume of issues, and hope that our customers know that we are always available.



PWSA Dispatcher, Deborah Kenney



PWSA Dispatcher, Mark Madero

"Being a dispatcher,
you deal with
constant changes
and multiple
problems to solve."

PWSA Dispatcher, Amber Smith

Job Postings

Interested in working at PWSA?
We are looking for dedicated and
talented people to join our team.

Senior Health & Safety Manager
Administration

Project Manager
Engineering & Construction

Associate Project Manager
Engineering & Construction

Engineer III
Engineering & Construction

Inspector II
Engineering & Construction

Plant Operator
Water Quality & Production

Electrician
Water Quality & Production

Steamfitter
Field Operations

Plumber
Field Operations

Inventory Controls Specialist I
Warehouse

**Customer Service Representative
(Full-time and Part-time)**
Customer Service

New Hires

WELCOME ABOARD!

Zachary Larimer

Compliance Analyst, Customer Service

Clayton Mckee

Plant Operator



Visit pgh2o.com/about-us/careers to learn more.

Sewer Upgrades Continue in Lincoln Place Neighborhood

Crews continue to make progress after COVID construction delays

After restrictions from COVID-19 lifted, construction crews got to work on a \$2.9 million sewer improvement project in Pittsburgh's Lincoln Place neighborhood.

The work is mainly comprised of sewer lining, a process that rehabilitates the sewer by inserting a resin liner through existing sewer manholes and curing it to the inside of the pipe to repair any cracks or structural issues with the sewer. This will prolong the life of sewers in the area without having to complete costly and disruptive full sewer replacements. Crews will also repair small portions of the main that cannot be upgraded with lining alone, install new storm drains in the area to better collect stormwater runoff, raise or re-install manholes that have been covered by asphalt or growth over the years, and general cleaning and televising work inside sewers.

To date, crews have made steady progress, initially focusing on any small sewer repairs that needed to be made before lining work. They have also completed over half of the necessary sewer cleaning and televising work. Manhole repairs are also approximately 80% complete throughout the neighborhood. All work in the neighborhood is expected to be completed in summer of 2021. For more information, visit pgh2o.com/31st-Ward-Sewers.



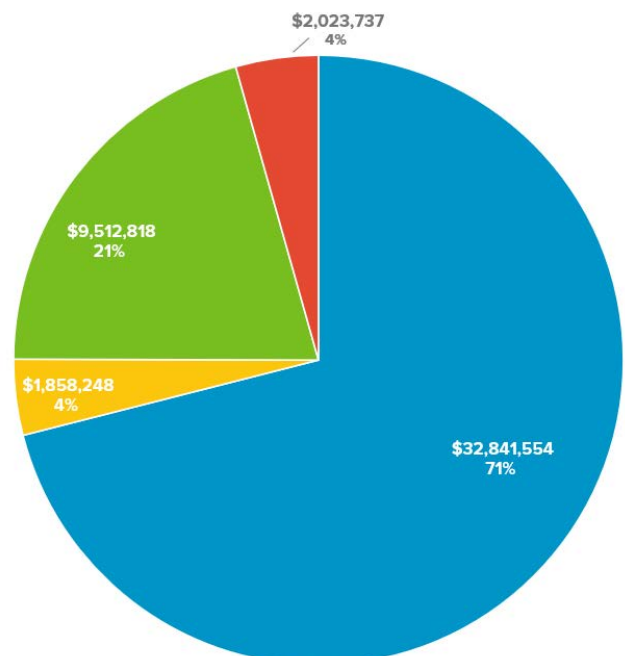
Crews make repairs to a manhole on Keefe Street

2020 Capital Spending

Amounts reflect total expenditures from January 1 - July 16, 2020

- Water
- Sewer
- Stormwater
- Other

TOTAL: \$46,236,357





WATER WISE

Proper Lawn and Garden Care Protects Streams and Rivers

Fertilizers may help your garden or lawn grow, but nitrogen and phosphorus, nutrients found in fertilizers, can harm downstream water quality. When it rains, any fertilizer nutrients that haven't been used by plants are washed away into our streams and rivers. These nutrients can cause excessive growth of algae and aquatic weeds. Algae reduce the amount of oxygen in the water, which kills fish and aquatic wildlife.

Take the following actions to help protect our stream and rivers:

- Only fertilize if necessary and do not overapply.
- Use a soil test to measure existing nutrient levels.
- If your soil phosphorus levels are adequate, select a phosphorus-free fertilizer.
- Select slow-release and organic fertilizers, which are less likely to wash away.
- Spread grass clippings over your lawn to provide needed nitrogen to soil.
- Fertilize lawns in the fall to promote root growth and prevent nutrients from washing away during spring rains.



Learn more at pgh2o.com/help-manage-stormwater.



Save Water and Money While Growing Your Lawn or Garden

A lot of water can be wasted when caring for a lawn or garden. Reducing water waste can help lower your water bill, protect the environment, and save limited water resources for future generations.

You can use our online water usage portal to track your household's real-time usage and sign up to receive alerts when there is a spike in water use. Detecting and repairing leaking hoses, irrigation systems, and spigots can help you save a lot of water and money.

Taking the following actions can also help you reduce water waste and save money:

- Water your plants in the morning or early evening to reduce water lost to evaporation
- Use an automatic shut-off nozzle for your gardening hose to control the flow
- Set sprinklers to water the lawn or garden only – not the street or sidewalk
- Install a rain barrel to catch rainwater from your roof then repurpose it to water your plants



Learn more at pgh2o.com/WaterConservation.



Customer Assistance Program

Our Customer Assistance Programs are designed to provide financial relief for income-qualified residential customers who are having difficulty paying their water and sewer bill.

For more information about our programs, including the Winter Shut-off Moratorium, Bill Discount, Cash Assistance, and Free Private Lead Line Replacements, please visit pgh2o.com/CAP or call Dollar Energy Fund at 866.762.2348.



Do We Have Your Number?

Did you know that we call customers during water emergencies and outages? It is important to verify that we have the best number to reach you. You can even add multiple numbers for your account, so your entire household is informed about our work.

HOW DO I UPDATE MY CONTACT INFORMATION?

Call PWSA Customer Service: 412.255.2423 (Press 5)

Or visit our website: pgh2o.com/pay

PWSA is committed to maintaining and protecting the confidentiality and privacy of our customers and will not share your information with third party vendors.

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