

Current Lead and Copper Rule Requirements for Public Water Systems

The Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR) was introduced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2021 to strengthen protections against lead contamination in drinking water. This rule requires public water systems (PWS) to take proactive steps in identifying and notifying customers about their service line materials.

Key Requirements of the LCRR:

1. Initial Service Line Inventory:
 - PWS must identify and document the materials used in service lines.
 - This inventory must be submitted to state primacy agencies by October 16, 2024.
 - The inventory will help determine which lines contain lead, galvanized requiring replacement (GRR), non-lead, or unknown materials.
2. Consumer Notification of Service Line Material:
 - Customers must be informed if their service line contains lead, GRR, or unknown materials.
 - If a service line is classified as unknown, further investigation is required to determine its composition.
3. Lead Action Level Exceedance:
 - If lead levels exceed the action threshold, water systems must issue a Tier 1 Public Notification to affected consumers.
 - The Public Notification must be issued no later than 24 hours after the system learns about the exceedance.

Transition to the Lead and Copper Rule Improvement (LCRI):

- The LCRI, published in 2024, builds upon the LCRR and aims to locate legacy pipes and accelerate the replacement of lead service lines.
- Compliance with the LCRI begins on November 1, 2027.
- The primary goal is to reduce lead exposure by ensuring that lead service lines are identified and replaced.

Addressing Unknown Service Lines:

- Before the LCRI takes effect, unknown service lines must be identified and characterized.
- A service line is classified as unknown if the material of the public or private portion –or both- cannot be confirmed through historical/ written records or visual inspection.

- Further efforts to identify the composition of unknown lines will allow additional lead line replacement and will minimize the number of unknown lines in the inventory.

Customer Involvement:

- An engineering firm or the PWS must send notification to homeowners regarding their service line material.
- If a property has an unknown service line, the PWS, an engineering firm or a third-party contractor must contact the homeowner through:
 - **Service line survey letter:** a letter containing guidance that will help the customer identify their service line material, along with clear instructions on how to report the findings to the public water system.
 - **An in-person visit:** the PWS, an engineering firm, or a third-party representative will visit the homeowner and offer assistance with their service line material identification.

Importance of Cooperation:

- These actions will contribute to an accurate inventory that will guide the EPA-required lead service line replacement plan.
- Ongoing education, collaboration, and community engagement are essential for sustaining mitigation efforts that can reduce lead exposure in drinking water.

For more information, visit the [EPA website](#), where you'll find additional guidance and resources to help water systems comply with regulations and protect communities from the risks of lead in drinking water.

