

your leader in lead information

# H2Oconnection

OCTOBER 2016



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WATER WORKS

## WELCOME Welcome to the first edition of the Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) lead newsletter, *H2Oconnection*.

Providing information, stories, data, links, and more to keep you and your community up-to-date with how GCWW is progressing towards making Cincinnati a lead-safe city!

Please provide feedback to [commgicww@cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:commgicww@cincinnati-oh.gov) — let us know what you would like to hear about, so we can provide the updates that are important to you!

## SAFE WATER IS THE FIRST PRIORITY

**Greater Cincinnati Water Works uses state-of-the-art water treatment processes that include multiple barriers to protect public health.**



GCWW lab technician analyzing water samples.

GCWW's Richard Miller Treatment plant in California, Ohio uses state-of-the-art water-treatment processes that include multiple barriers to protect health, plus a corrosion control system that specifically minimizes the amount of lead that may leach into water from service lines.

**Although GCWW's corrosion control treatment is extremely effective in minimizing lead, some sources of lead still exist** and small amounts can potentially be picked up as the water flows from the public water system pipes into and throughout the home. Sources of lead include some brass, lead solder and especially lead service lines that can exist in older homes.

In September, a new law went into effect in Ohio that requires water utilities to inform customers of the results of lead analyses within two days of the utility receiving the results. This law (called House Bill 512) also set other deadlines and requirements concerning lead in drinking water.

**Additionally, as part of the GCWW Enhanced Lead Program, staff respond immediately to customers with lead levels greater than 15 parts per billion (ppb).** A member of the Water Quality staff calls the customer to discuss their results. They answer any questions, discuss possible reasons for the high levels, and suggest appropriate short-term and long-term remediation efforts that the customer can take.

GCWW also recently began providing faucet filters to customers with levels greater than 15ppb. The filters meet the NSF 53 2009 standard, which removes both particulate and dissolved lead. This is intended as a temporary measure. The customer is highly encouraged to replace their service line as the primary and most significant step to eliminate lead in their water.



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# GCWW CONNECTS WITH COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SCHOOLS

**GCWW takes additional, proactive measures to understand water quality.**

GCWW understands that given the vast amount of stories about lead from across the country, customers may wonder what pertains to them, and where to get accurate information. GCWW initiated its “Speaker’s Bureau” (named H2O Connect) to further educate the public about lead and its potential presence in drinking water.

**GCWW employees have attended more than 35 community council meetings across the city**, answering questions about lead, sharing literature, and providing key information. GCWW is taking a proactive and transparent approach to educating and informing consumers. Several communities have extended invitations to attend regularly. If you would like GCWW to attend a meeting or present for your organization, please contact Lynette Whitteberry at (513) 591-7976.

**H2O Connect has also begun targeted outreach to locations with concentrated segments of vulnerable populations** – schools and day cares (infants and school-age children are among the most susceptible to lead). To effectively reach these groups, GCWW, in partnership with Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) and the City of Cincinnati Health Department (CHD), embarked upon an outreach and assistance program to educate local school officials based on the *3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools* Guidance Document published by United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). In this document, which focuses on “Training, Testing, and Telling” about lead, USEPA suggests that schools implement their own water testing program for reducing lead in drinking water as part of their overall plan for decreasing environmental threats.



## **One school recently went through this process and shares its experiences and the benefits of testing:**

Although St. Teresa of Avila School in Cincinnati does not have a lead service line, the facilities manager and administration wanted to ensure the safety of their pupils and staff. They proactively contacted Greater Cincinnati Water Works to request assistance with sampling and testing for lead.

By early June of 2016, school officials had already worked out a sampling plan, received their sample kits, and sampled the water.

When the results were available, GCWW informed St. Teresa that four (4) out of 40 samples came back with values above the EPA action level of 15 ppb, and they immediately activated remediation.

St. Teresa’s staff disabled two (2) of the four (4) locations, so they could no longer be used. The third location was a seldom-used hose tap spicket off the bottom of the water meter (located in the basement), while the fourth location was a single sink in the boy’s restroom. This fixture was examined and replaced. When re-sampled recently, it came back with a “no detection” level. **St. Teresa is a leader in ensuring the safety of the pupils.**

More than 75 schools in the Greater Cincinnati area are in the process of partnering with GCWW to do the same.



*Shown above is a service line at a school.*



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# GCWW CONNECTS WITH COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SCHOOLS

**GCWW takes additional, proactive measures to understand water quality.**

Working with GCWW, St. Teresa is the first to follow the USEPA's 3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools Program to completion, by identifying their plumbing materials, performing testing of all of their outlets that could be used for drinking and cooking, and informing people about the results.

Follow up letters from St. Teresa to parents about the recent lead testing brought communication full-circle, keeping them informed and aware of the actions taken by GCWW and St. Teresa to ensure pupil safety.

**We commend and recognize St. Teresa for proactively taking the necessary steps to understand their water quality and quickly eliminate the sources of lead in their school!**

In addition to its work with St. Teresa, GCWW is in the process of working with multiple schools, both public and private, within the service area to assist with analyzing samples and sampling plans. Multiple informational meetings for school personnel were held around the City; and GCWW has been working proactively since April to support schools (see list below). These efforts are preventative and precautionary — providing valuable information to administration and parents, and enabling them to respond accordingly.

See all GCWW school lead test results online at: [Lead.MyGCWW.org](http://Lead.MyGCWW.org)

## Schools working with GCWW:

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 56 Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) | Roger Bacon              |
| Corryville Catholic                | Seven Hills              |
| God's Bible College & School       | St. Aloysius on the Ohio |
| Forest Hills (14 buildings)        | St. Bernard              |
| Holy Family Catholic School        | St. Joseph Elementary    |
| John Paul                          | St. Teresa of Avila      |
| McAuley                            | St. Ursula               |
| McNicholas                         | Whitaker Elementary      |
| Mercy Montessori                   |                          |

## Outreach to daycare facilities is also underway.

Using several methods to identify facilities and enhance outreach, including the state licensing agency and childcare advocacy organizations, the H2O Connect partnership is currently coordinating and scheduling two Learning Collaboratives with "WeTHRIVE!" (an initiative of Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH), began in 2009) to help get the word out to local Day Care and Child Care providers about lead, and how to make Cincinnati a Lead-Safe City. **Day Care providers care for and protect one of life's greatest gifts — our children — so the partnership is reaching out to better explain the potential risks** that lead might present in childcare facilities and what can be done to protect children.

## H2O Connect Learning Collaboratives:

- October 26** — Dunham Recreation Center  
4356 Dunham Lane | 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
- November 5** — Greater Cincinnati Water Works  
4747 Spring Grove Ave. | 8:00 am – 9:30 am



GCWW staff verifying a service line at a school.



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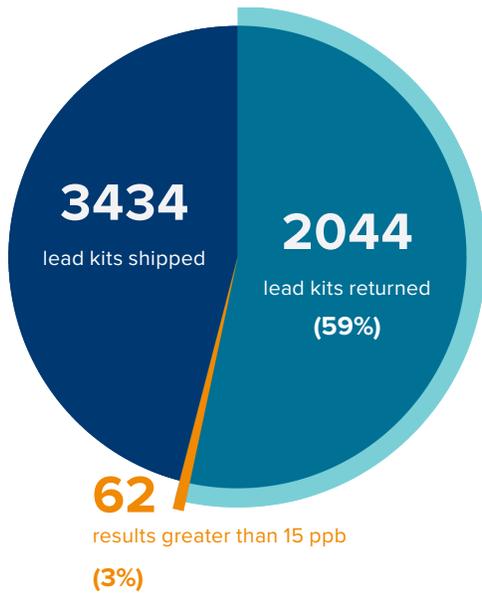
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# LEAD BY THE NUMBERS\*

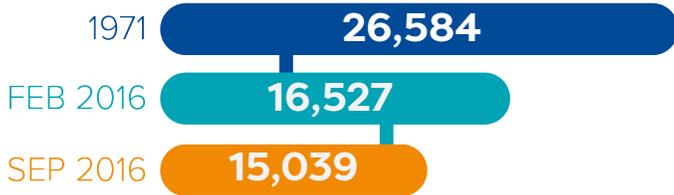
## Communication and Outreach

GCWW's Enhanced Lead Program Tier 1 initiatives address outreach, education, and communication while Tier 2 strategies consist of methods to assist in removing the lead service lines from the system. GCWW believes it is important to keep customers informed as lead issues are addressed.

### Lead Test Kit Statistics



### Active Lead Service Lines



### Lead Test Kits Requested in 2016



\*Accurate as of 9.29.2016

# SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) has approximately 15,000 public lead service lines and it is estimated that at least 27,000 private lead service lines (LSL) still exist in the system. **GCWW has been removing lead service lines from the system since 1971 through a partial LSL removal program** in association with the existing water main replacement capital program. When the public portion of the LSL is removed, customers are encouraged to remove their portion of the line, however, the cost to remove this line (averaging \$3000 per private LSL) has been the largest obstacle for customers attempting to address this issue and improve their water quality.

As shared in a recent report to the Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee, partial replacement of LSL (replacement of the public-side only) presents known risks to the customer if the customer-side LSL remains in place. Current research from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) documents the risks of lead from many sources, including water, and specifically discusses the ramifications of partial LSL replacement (AAP Council On Environmental Health. Prevention of Childhood Lead Toxicity. Pediatrics. 2016; 138(1):e20161493). The risk from partial replacement can only currently be mitigated through flushing and point-of-use devices. GCWW currently provides filter pitcher kits to customers affected by public LSL replacement due to water main replacement or a leaking branch. Additionally, the recent Report of the Lead and Copper Rule Working Group to the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (final, August 24, 2015) strongly recommends **full LSL replacements** in lieu of partial replacements.

Greater Cincinnati Water Works has researched and reviewed this information and is now preparing a program to completely remove lead service lines (both public and private portions of the lines).

**GCWW proposed an annual \$9.7 million, 15-year CIP program to replace lead service lines. The proposed program was recently passed by City Council and will include the following:**

- GCWW will remove entire service line:
  - Public portion replacement - paid by GCWW
  - Private portion replacement - paid by property owner, either up front or over time through a property assessment
- GCWW will establish a low-income assistance program to help those customers who qualify with repayment for their private portion