

leading the way

 removing lead
 protecting health
 revitalizing communities



A Service of The City of Cincinnati

GREATER CINCINNATI
WATER WORKS

SPRING 2021

EPA Seeks Public Input on New Lead Rule

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is extending the effective date of its revised regulations to reduce lead in drinking water so it can seek further public input, particularly from communities that are most at risk of lead exposure.

As a result, the effective date for the new regulations – known as the Revised Lead and Copper Rule – has changed from March 16, 2021, to June 17, 2021. The additional time is needed so the EPA can get additional public comment and undertake a thorough review to ensure the revisions comply with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act.

A second pending proposal would extend the effective date until December 16, 2021, and extend the compliance deadline to September 16, 2024. This action will ensure that drinking water systems continue to have the entire three years provided by the Safe Drinking Water Act to take steps needed to assure regulatory compliance.

The EPA is seeking public input online. To submit comments, visit www.regulations.gov/docket/EPA-HQ-OW-2017-0300.

The EPA's new Lead and Copper Rule is designed to protect children and communities from potential lead exposure risks. Improvements under the new rule include:



- Using science-based testing protocols to find more sources of lead in drinking water
- Establishing a trigger level to jumpstart mitigation earlier and in more communities
- Implementing mandatory testing in schools and child care facilities
- Requiring all water systems to identify and make public the locations of lead service lines

These regulation revisions are the first since 1991.

As an industry leader, GCWW already provides free lead testing for customers, and at schools and child care facilities. Additionally, GCWW was awarded a \$725,000 grant from the State of Ohio and the Ohio EPA to replace lead water lines at local child care facilities. Because of the grant, there is no cost to child care providers or property owners who participate. The grant opportunity is available to all child care providers licensed by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services in the GCWW service area, whether they rent or own the building.

For more information, visit Leadmap.myGCWW.org or call 513.651.LEAD (2353).



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GCWW Executive Director Receives AWWA Diversity and Inclusion Award



Congratulations to Cathy B. Bailey, Executive Director of Greater Cincinnati Water Works, for being selected as the individual recipient of the "2021 Diversity and Inclusion Award."

The award is presented by the American Water Works Association (AWWA), the largest organization of water supply professionals in the world. It recognizes an individual or organization that has created, promoted, and maintained diversity by establishing an environment that recognizes, encourages, and effectively utilizes everyone's talents.

Cathy is the first African American and woman to lead Cincinnati's major, independent municipal water utility in its 200+-year history. In this role, she supports mentoring efforts by connecting businesses and civic groups with students in economically-challenged schools. Cathy regularly serves as a panelist at "Gals in Government", which helps young women learn and train to either run for office or advocate for their communities as a citizen, neighbor, or leader.

AWWA supports diversity and inclusion as being essential to the growth and continued success of any organization.

The award will be presented during AWWA's Annual Conference & Exposition (ACE21) in June 2021.



DID YOU KNOW?

Older homes are more likely to have plumbing fixtures containing lead.

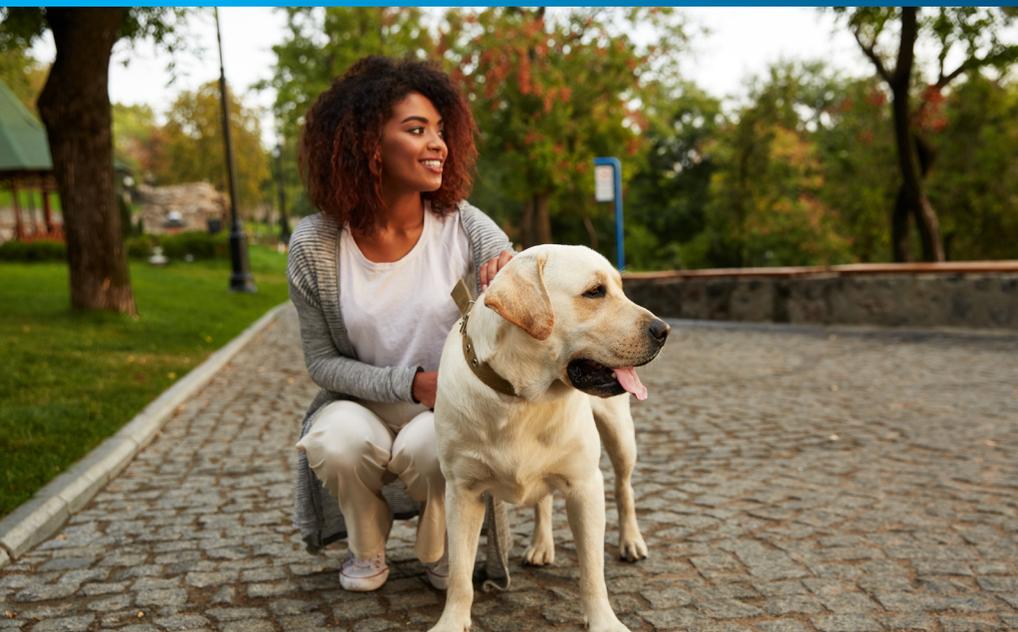
Systems that deliver water with fewer dissolved minerals and water that is more acidic can be more corrosive, increasing the risk of lead contamination. GCWW treats the water so that it is not corrosive, but if lead is present in plumbing materials in the home, there is a chance that some small amounts of lead can still get into the water.

To see if your home or business has lead service lines, please check GCWW's convenient online map at Leadmap.myGCWW.org.

If you suspect your water may contain lead, please request a free lead testing kit by visiting La.myGCWW.org/lead-test-kit.

GCWW is at the leading edge of water treatment technology and passionate about protecting the health of our communities from the potential health hazards caused by lead service lines. GCWW has a longstanding, effective program to reduce lead exposure in drinking water.

For more information, email us at: Lead@gcww.cincinnati-oh.gov, or call **513.651.LEAD (5323)**.



Lead Poses Danger to All Family Members, Including Dogs and Cats

Much of the public has long known lead in drinking water poses a health hazard for children and adults, but many people don't realize it can also be dangerous for household pets.

Lead enters drinking water primarily when corrosion occurs to materials that contain lead in household plumbing.

Although GCWW has **no water transmission or distribution mains made from lead**, some of the water lines serving individual properties are composed of the hazardous metal. Lead exposure can cause various health problems.

- In children, lead has been linked to nerve damage, learning disabilities, and impaired blood cell function;
- In adults, lead can cause increased blood pressure, decreased kidney function, and reproductive difficulties.

Similarly, lead is toxic for dogs and cats. Pets exposed to lead over time may develop neurological symptoms such as seizures or wobbling while walking. Other signs can include fatigue, poor appetite, extreme thirst, increased urination, and abdominal pain.

Lead poisoning in pets cannot be treated at home. If you think your dog or cat may have been exposed to lead or have lead poisoning, take your pet to a veterinarian for blood tests. GCWW wants to make sure all members of your household have safe drinking water. We help property owners remove their lead service lines by paying 40% of the removal cost, to a

maximum of \$1,500. Additional financial assistance is available to eligible low-income owners through the Help Eliminate Lead Pipes (HELP) program.

Also, child care facilities in GCWW's service area can get lead lines replaced free of charge using funds from a State of Ohio grant. (See article on page 1.)

The EPA cautions that homes built before 1986 likely have lead paint or pipes, fixtures, and solder that contain lead. Until January 2014, new pipes, fittings, and fixtures could also be up to 8-percent lead.

LEAD SAMPLING KITS ANALYZED

2020 (Jan.-March)

424 

2021 (Jan.-March)

414 

GCWW remains committed to removing lead service lines at homes and businesses, and our crews follow all guidelines regarding COVID-19 safety protocols.

MEET YOUR GCWW LEAD TEAM

VICKY MINNICH



Job title:

Administrative Specialist

Years at GCWW:

4 months
(13.5 years with Cincinnati municipal government overall)

Where did you grow up:

Covedale/Bridgetown

Educational background:

B.S., Business Administration

Hobbies or interests:

Gardening, Teaching, Traveling

Why is your work important?:

Making a difference in the lives of others is my calling. Getting to be a part of a great team that is actively improving the health of thousands of children and families in the Greater Cincinnati region, by replacing the lead service lines, aligns with my personal mission and is a great honor for me. I truly believe this is vital work.

What should people know about the GCWW Enhanced Lead Program?:

As we have seen in the news, lead in drinking water is a major health concern for our most vulnerable citizens. GCWW has created a program to replace thousands of lead service lines every year, and has built a strong team dedicated to working with each property owner to address this concern.

By using our HELP assistance initiative, tax assessment options, and grants, the GCWW Enhanced Lead Program strives to make lead service line replacement economically viable for every customer.

We want to thank Vicky for her valuable contributions to the Lead Team as she transitions to her new role helping with the training and development of GCWW employees.

LEAD SERVICE LINES REPLACED

PUBLIC SIDE:

2020 (Jan.-March)

450



2021 (Jan.-March)

118



PRIVATE SIDE:

2020 (Jan.-March)

299



2021 (Jan.-March)

156



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