

Lead and Copper Rule Improvements Quick Guide: Service Line Replacements

May 2026

What are the requirements for replacing service lines?

The Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) significantly strengthen the service line replacement requirements compared to the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR). The LCRI requires suppliers to submit an inventory of all service lines and connectors to guide their service line replacement plan. Water Systems must replace all lead and galvanized requiring replacement (GRR) service lines, regardless of tap sampling results, within 10 years.

Requirements, details, and deadlines.

Requirement	Details	Date(s)
Service line replacement plan	- Water Systems with lead, galvanized requiring replacement (GRR), or unknown service lines must submit a service line replacement plan. - This plan must be made available to the public.	By Nov. 1, 2027.
	The water system must update and submit the replacement plan annually.	By Jan. 30, starting in 2029.
Mandatory full replacement of lead and GRR service lines	- Water Systems must replace all lead and GRR service lines under their control (i.e., legal/physical access). - Water Systems must make a “reasonable effort,” as defined by the rule, to obtain property owner consent for replacement of lines not under the water system’s control.	Starting Nov 1, 2027, and completed by Dec. 31, 2037.
Partial replacements prohibited	Unless a partial replacement is part of an emergency repair or coordinated infrastructure work, the LCRI prohibits leaving a portion of any lead or GRR service lines in place when replacements are performed.	Effective Nov. 1, 2027.
Follow-up tap sampling	- The water system must offer to collect a follow-up tap sample between three and six months after a full or partial lead or GRR service line replacement. - After a minimum six-hour stagnation, partial replacements require a first and fifth-liter sample, and full replacements require a first-liter sample.	Effective Nov. 1, 2027.

Requirement	Details	Date(s)
Annual replacement rate and deferred deadline	Water Systems must meet an average annual replacement rate of at least 10 percent calculated across a cumulative period unless the water system is subject to a shortened replacement rate or eligible for a deferred replacement rate.	Starting Dec. 31, 2030. Annually thereafter.
	Water System on a deferred replacement rate must provide information to support the need for a deferred deadline.	Every three years.
Calculation of the replacement pool	- Water System must calculate the replacement pool by adding the total number of lead, GRR, and unknown service lines in the baseline inventory (submitted by Nov. 1, 2027). - The replacement pool is calculated at the beginning of each program year and may change over time as service lines are investigated.	Nov. 1, 2027
Replacement of lead connectors when encountered	- Water System must replace lead connectors when encountered during planned or emergency infrastructure work, unless the connector is not under the control of the water system. - These replacements are not considered in the mandatory replacement rate calculation.	Effective Nov. 1, 2027.
Customer-prompted service line replacement	- Water Systems must replace the remaining portion of a lead or GRR service line in response to a customer-initiated service line replacement. - If a water system learns of a customer-initiated service line replacement that occurred within the last six months, the remaining portion of the lead or GRR service line must be replaced within 45 days. Water Systems must notify the department if they cannot meet this deadline within 30 days. - If a water system learns of a customer-initiated service line replacement that occurred more than six months in the past, the remaining portion of the lead or GRR service line must be updated in the inventory and replaced in accordance with mandatory replacement requirements.	Within 45 days of the customer service line replacement, or learning of a customer-owned replacement that occurred within the past six months.
Change in ownership	When a property changes owners, the water system is required to offer a full replacement of a lead or GRR service line to the new owner.	Within six months.
	A water system must make a reasonable effort to gain consent from the new owner for replacement.	Within one year.

Requirement	Details	Date(s)
Requirements for partial and full service line replacements	Water Systems must notify the owner and customers supplied by the affected service line replacement in advance (for coordinated work) or at the time of replacement (for emergencies).	At least 45 days in advance, or at the time of an emergency.
	- Water Systems must provide a notification after the replacement and before the service line is returned to service, relaying the possible temporary increase of lead levels in their drinking water and flushing instructions. - A pitcher filter or point-of-use device, six months of replacement cartridges, and instructions must be provided to each consumer at the time of replacement.	No later than before the service line is returned to service.
	Water Systems must offer to replace the partial service line created by an emergency replacement to the property owner.	Within 45 days of emergency replacement.
Outreach for failure to meet the service line replacement rate	- Water Systems that do not meet the service line replacement rate calculated across a cumulative period must conduct department-approved outreach. - The water system must conduct outreach activities annually until it meets the required service line replacement rate, or when no lead, GRR, or unknown service lines remain.	The year following the program year in which the water system failed to meet its service line replacement rate.
Service line replacement reporting requirements	A water system must annually certify to the department the number of replacements that have occurred and that it has conducted notification and mitigation requirements in the previous program year.	By Jan. 30, 2029, then annually by Jan. 30.
	If the water system collects samples following a partial or full service line replacement, the results and additional information must be reported to verify that all service line replacement activities were completed.	Within the first 10 days after the month results are received.

Questions

To learn more, visit the [Lead & Copper Rule webpage](#). Email questions to DWRWater.Compliance@tn.gov.