

press release



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SUEZ TO REPLACE THOUSANDS OF LEAD SERVICE LINES IN BERGEN AND HUDSON COUNTIES IN 2019

SUEZ today announced the launch of a comprehensive lead service line replacement project to take out 25 percent of the lead in its drinking water system in Northern New Jersey this year -- with the ultimate goal of removing all the lead.

More than a dozen crews are mobilizing across Bergen and Hudson counties in a sweeping attack on lead service lines, the pipes that connect water mains in the street to individual homes. Overall, as many as 100 lead lines will be replaced each week – approximately 2,400 by the end of the year. The \$15 million project will remove 50,000 feet of lead from the system.

“This has been an all hands on deck effort to attack this issue. It’s a targeted approach that will maximize the amount of lead removed,” said Mark McKoy, Vice President and General Manager. “We are moving quickly on this serious matter and are thankful to Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco, Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise and town officials for working closely with us to help our customers.”

Within weeks, work will begin in eight municipalities that have the highest number of lead service lines: Bogota, Hackensack, North Bergen, Ridgefield Park, Rutherford, Teaneck, Union City and West New York. As the project ramps up, multiple crews will be replacing the utility’s lines in every town, every day.

Other municipalities with smaller pockets of lead service lines are also being targeted. Crews will begin in Alpine, Lodi, Old Tappan, River Vale, Upper Saddle River and Wallington, and eventually sweep through other areas of Bergen and Hudson counties.

In addition, SUEZ is working with Bergen County to replace lead service lines in coordination with road reconstruction projects. Still more of the utility’s service lines will be replaced in East Rutherford and Little Ferry in conjunction with roadway improvement projects.

Following a sampling program that found elevated levels of lead in 15 of 108 homes tested in Bergen and Hudson counties, SUEZ has been working intensely to address the issue. Water quality specialists have been analyzing lab data. Engineers and operations personnel continue to monitor corrosion control and have developed a master plan to remove lead from the system. Still others have been

coordinating with town officials so that work can begin in early April.

Work is already underway at many of the 15 homes that showed elevated lead levels. SUEZ is replacing its lead service lines and also providing free replacement of lead lines owned by customers.

“It was important to us to make sure that our customers in these homes know we are doing everything we can for them,” McKoy said. “Replacing those lines is the right thing to do.”

Facts about lead

The issue is not in the water supply. There is no detectible level of lead in the water leaving the treatment plant and no lead in the water mains.

But lead has been detected in some homes where interior plumbing, solder and fixtures contain lead or where the home is served by a lead service line. SUEZ owns the portion of the service line from the main to the curb, while the property owner is responsible for the portion from the curb to the home.

The majority of SUEZ customers in Northern New Jersey are NOT served by a utility-owned lead service line. Less than 5% of the utility’s service lines contain lead. Twelve percent have lead goosenecks – a small flexible pipe about 18 inches long that connects a water main to a service line.

As SUEZ works to replace its lead service lines, homeowners are strongly encouraged to have their side of the service line and internal plumbing inspected for lead by a licensed plumber.

Lead was a standard for the water industry for many decades because it could be bent to connect to a water main or a home. SUEZ has been replacing hundreds of lead service lines a year for decades. The company has also for years had a corrosion control treatment program to coat pipes to prevent lead from entering the water. Water samples from properties with lead lines, fixtures or plumbing have routinely tested within safe standards.

In addition to its service line replacement project, SUEZ has taken these steps for customers:

- Customers can obtain more information or determine if they are served by a utility-owned lead service line or gooseneck by: Checking their online account, visiting www.SUEZWQ.com or www.mysuezwater.com/njwq, emailing SUEZ at sueznjcustserv@suez-na.com or calling the SUEZ customer service center at 800-422-5987.
- Customers who are served or may be served by a utility-owned lead service line or gooseneck can request a test of their drinking water and an assessment of their portion of the service line by calling the SUEZ customer service center at 800-422-5987.
- If a test result is above the government’s standard, SUEZ will provide a water pitcher with a filter that removes lead from drinking water

About SUEZ North America

SUEZ North America operates across all 50 states and Canada with 3,260 employees dedicated to environmental sustainability and smart and sustainable resource management. The company provides drinking water, wastewater and waste collection service to 6.4 million people on a daily basis; treats

over 600 million gallons of water and over 450 million gallons of wastewater each day; delivers water treatment and advanced network solutions to 16,000 industrial and municipal sites; processes 55,000 tons of waste for recycling; rehabilitates and maintains water assets for more than 4,000 municipal and industrial customers; and manages \$4.1 billion in total assets. The company posted revenues of \$1.064 billion in 2017 and is a subsidiary of Paris-based SUEZ.

About SUEZ

With 90,000 people on the five continents, SUEZ is a world leader in smart and sustainable resource management. We provide water and waste management solutions that enable cities and industries to optimize their resource management and strengthen their environmental and economic performances, in line with regulatory standards. To meet increasing demands to overcome resource quality and scarcity challenges, SUEZ is fully engaged in the resource revolution. With the full potential of digital technologies and innovative solutions, the Group recovers 17 million tons of waste a year, produces 3.9 million tons of secondary raw materials and 7 TWh of local renewable energy. It also secures water resources, delivering wastewater treatment services to 58 million people and reusing 882 million m³ of wastewater. SUEZ generated total revenues of \$19.6 billion (15.9 billion euros) in 2017.

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