Greater Cincinnati Water Works
Plumber Frequently Asked Questions

Lead Service Line Replacement Program (LSLRP)

To reduce exposure to lead in drinking water, Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) has created a Lead Service Line Replacement Program (LSLRP). Key aspects of the program:

1. In October of 2016, Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) was directed by the City of Cincinnati Council, via Ordinance No. 326-2016, to take the appropriate steps to develop, fund, and implement a program to replace known lead service lines (LSLs) in the City over a 15-year period, both on public and private property.
   a. The ordinance also directed that this program include a property assessment option for owners to spread the reimbursement of the private LSL replacement cost over multiple years, and a customer assistance program to assist low income customers with the cost of replacement.
2. Through another ordinance, Ordinance No. 185-2017, and effective July 28, 2017, lead service lines are prohibited in the GCWW system.
3. Enforcement of this ban is being phased in over 15-years.
4. This program is available to all property owners with an LSL and includes a maximum $1,500 cost share and, for City of Cincinnati property owners, the option to finance the remaining balance as a special assessment to real property.
5. The private-side work is then done by contractors or plumbers who are contracted with GCWW through the City’s procurement process, either for a water main replacement project, or from a rotating prequalified list established through the City’s Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process.
6. GCWW is taking no ownership of the private side water service branch; it will remain the responsibility of the property owner.

The following information is provided as frequently asked questions for plumbers interested in becoming a plumber on the GCWW pre-qualified list to perform the work.

How can plumbers participate in the LSLRP?
The City of Cincinnati Purchasing Department has an open Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for plumbers to replace lead service lines on private property. Plumbers must submit their qualifications according to the requirements in the RFQ. To obtain a copy of the RFQ please contact Cincinnati Purchasing Department at 513-352-3209 or visit their website at https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/purchasing/ and click on Business
Opportunities. Plumber qualifications will be reviewed by the City and if they are determined to meet the qualifications to replace lead service lines on private property, they will be added to the pre-qualified plumber list.

What is the pre-qualified plumber list?
The pre-qualified plumber list is a list of plumbers who submitted a qualifications statement in response to the LSLRP RFQ and were determined by the City as qualified to perform lead service line replacement work on private property. Each plumber on this list will have the opportunity to bid on private side lead service line replacement work as part of the LSLRP.

What are the benefits of being on the pre-qualified plumbers list?
Plumbers will be paid for their work by the City of Cincinnati as per the City’s prompt pay ordinance. Plumbers will not have to collect any payment from private property owners. All coordination of work with the property owner and public outreach about the program will be done by GCWW. GCWW estimates approximately 44,000 LSL remain on private property in our system. Therefore, plumbers on the pre-qualified list will have many opportunities over the length of the program to bid on lead service line replacement work.

Does the pre-qualified list ever expire?
No. Plumbers will remain on the list if they continue to perform acceptable work and meet all rules and regulations established by the City of Cincinnati. Any plumber not performing acceptable work can be removed from the pre-qualified list at any time by the City. Plumbers may also have their names removed from the pre-qualified list at any time by submitting a written request to the City Purchasing Department.

Were there any outreach efforts to inform plumbers of the new GCWW program?
Yes, GCWW has presented information about the program at three meetings of the Cincinnati Master Plumbers Association, most recently attending the March 2018 meeting. GCWW also had a general informational meeting for plumbers in 2017 to begin explaining the program.

Do we currently have any pre-qualified plumbers?
Yes, On December 12/21/2017, the City’s Purchasing Department advertised an RFQ for plumbers to submit their qualifications to perform LSL replacement on private property. When the RFQ was advertised, the City’s Purchasing Department notified more than several thousand vendors registered with the City, tweeted and blasted this opportunity on social media, and advertised nationally. There was also a pre-submission meeting held to answer questions about the program. Submittals were received on 1/22/2018 and a committee was formed to evaluate the RFQ submittals. A total of nine plumbers submitted their qualifications. All nine plumbers were selected as pre-qualified for the program. Currently GCWW is looking for more plumbers to add to the pre-qualified list.
**Is there a maximum # of plumbers that can be on the list?**

No, there is no limit to the number of plumbers than can be on the list. GCWW plans to replace over 44,000 private lead service lines in 15 years. This is equivalent to replace approximately 2900 per year to get the work done. GCWW will need many plumbers to assist during the life of this program. Given this number of replacements, GCWW is hopeful that many plumbers will want to partner with us to perform this work.

**Will plumbers continue to be added to the list?**

Yes, the City of Cincinnati released another RFQ to solicit for more plumbers for the pre-qualified list. There is no deadline for responses for this RFQ. Plumbers can continue to submit qualifications at any time.

**How are lead service line replacement projects assigned to plumbers on the pre-qualified list?**

GCWW has been working from the beginning with the City’s Purchasing Department and the Department of Economic Inclusion to establish the criteria and process GCWW will follow when issuing work to the pre-qualified plumbers.

- All plumbers listed on the pre-qualified list will be given an opportunity to submit a quote for each property needing to replace their LSL.
- Plumbers will have 5 business days to submit a quote to GCWW for the cost to replace the LSL.
- Each quote must be signed and price guaranteed for 90-days. Signed quotes will bind the plumber to GCWW’s scope of services and related terms & conditions.
- GCWW will select the most advantageous quote for the property owner and submit that quote to the property owner for acceptance.
- If property owner accepts the quote and signs the Lead Service Line Replacement Program (LSLRP) agreement, the selected plumber will be issued a Purchase Order by GCWW to perform the work.
- Upon issuing the Purchase Order, the plumber must complete the work within 21-days.

**Will there be enough work for multiple jobs to be assigned to pre-qualified plumbers?**

Yes, GCWW will work to replace over 44,000 private lead service lines in 15 years. This is equivalent to replace approximately 2900 per year to get the work done. GCWW will need many plumbers to assist during the life of this program. Given this number of replacements, GCWW is hopeful that many plumbers will want to partner with us to perform this work.

**If a plumber’s price quote is determined to be the best and most advantageous by the City are they guaranteed the work?**

No. GCWW will provide the best and most advantageous price quote to the property owner for their acceptance. If the property owner accepts and signs the contract with GCWW then the plumber will perform the work. However, every property has the option to contract directly with any plumber if the wish, but they will not be eligible for the cost assistance and payment benefits offered in the LSLRP.
Will plumbers have access to see inside the house/building prior to providing a quote for the work?
No. Due to the number of plumbers asked to provide price quotes for replacement and the difficulty of scheduling inside house/building access, plumbers will be provided a sketch of the property showing the approximate location of the lead service line to be replaced. Plumbers are encouraged to visit the site and make observations from the street. They should rely on their experiences of replacing water service lines when putting their price quotes together.

Will plumbers be allowed to submit for cost adjustments as a result of doing unforeseen work?
Yes. GCWW will accept cost adjustment requests from plumbers. GCWW will work with the plumber to investigate cost adjustments to determine their accuracy and validity. If the cost adjustments are determined to be valid the proper adjustments will be applied.

What registrations, certifications, or licenses must a plumber have to participate in the LSLRP?
All plumbers must be a registered vendor with the City of Cincinnati. They must have a licensed plumber(s) on staff with the State of Ohio. They must have an employee(s) on staff who is listed as a Certified Person with GCWW.

How do I become a Registered Vendor with the City of Cincinnati?
To become a registered vendor with the City of Cincinnati, please contact Cincinnati Purchasing Department at 513-352-3209 or visit the city website at https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/purchasing/ and click on Register as a Vendor with the City.

How do I become a Certified Person with GCWW?
To become a Certified Person with GCWW please call 513-591-7837 to request a date and time to take GCWW’s free open-book test. Test will cover GCWW’s Rules & Regulations and general processes. To sit for the test, a plumber must be licensed in the State of Ohio. Upon passing the test, the plumber’s name will be listed on GCWW’s website as a Certified Person.

Can a plumber perform a private lead service line replacement if they are not on the pre-qualified LSLRP list?
Yes, a property owner can contract directly with a plumber that is not on the pre-qualified LSLRP list to replace the private lead service. If the property owner chooses to participate in the City’s LSLRP, then a City contracted plumber from the pre-qualified list will perform the replacement.
Are property owners allowed to choose which plumber they want from the pre-qualified list?

No, the LSLRP is a City program. Choosing one plumber to perform the work will eliminate the required competitive bidding process.

Are property owners required to join the LSLRP to get their lead service line replaced?

No, Joining the LSLRP has benefits for the property owner. City contractors perform the work and the owner does not have worry about soliciting bids from plumbers or coordinating any of the lead service replacement work. An added financial benefit for LSLRP participants is that GCWW will contribute to the cost up to $1,500 towards the total replacement of their lead service line. Furthermore, if a property owner lives in the City of Cincinnati, they can reimburse GCWW for the costs to replace their lead service line as a special assessment over a 5 or 10-year period applied to their semi-annual property tax bill.

If a plumber performs a private lead service line replacement and is not on the pre-qualified list will the property owner receive the benefits of the LSLRP?

No, the LSLRP is a GCWW program and through this program pays its contractors for the replacement work and obtains repayment from the owner. To participate in the LSLRP, an owner signs a contract with GCWW regarding liabilities, performance, and repayment to GCWW for the work. Without this contract there is no mechanism for GCWW to contribute to the cost of replacing their private side lead service line and is unable to offer any special assessment for reimbursement on their semi-annual property tax bill. GCWW must have a contract with the property owner to apply any benefits.

If selected for a private side lead service line replacement project, what is the contractual arrangement among the City, the property owner and the plumber?

GCWW and the property owner are parties to a contract authorizing the City and its contractor to enter the property and replace their private side lead service line, and for property owner repayment to GCWW. GCWW then issues a purchase order to the plumber selected through the quote process based on the plumber’s price quote, which serves as the contract between GCWW & the plumber. This contract provides for GCWW to make payment directly to the plumber and for the plumber to perform the outlined work and to follow the limits applicable to GCWW under its contract with the owner. The plumber will have no contract with the property owner, only with GCWW.

The purchase order will contain the scope of service and all terms and conditions. Work must be completed within 21 business days upon receipt of the purchase order. Upon completion and acceptance of work, plumber will submit invoice to GCWW for payment. GCWW will pay the plumber in approximately 30-days.
Why are property owners required to participate in GCWW’s LSL replacement program to obtain the cost share and assessment option?

The reasons for this requirement include:

• Cost sharing is provided in the form of a credit against the City contractor cost that is billed to the property owner. There is no mechanism for the City to issue payments for cost sharing amounts directly to property owners or to the property owner’s contractor.

• ORC 729.06 provides the authorization for the City to certify the costs as an assessment to real property if it is not completed by the property owner, but rather completed by the City within the specified time. There is no authorization to use property assessment financing for costs of work that is not performed by the City.

• Assurance that the work is completed to GCWW standards by qualified personnel.

• Coordination by GCWW for the public and private side replacement.

• Coordination by GCWW with the City and the County for the property assessment. City Council has to approve the requests for property assessments; GCWW needs to ensure the program is monitored and administered in a standard format, providing equal opportunities to all property owners that utilize this program.

• Competitive pricing for property owners.

• Incentive for property owner and contractor/plumber participation.

• Public funds are expended via qualifications and competitive based contracting.

What is the typical process to replace a private side lead service line?

The plumber must furnish all labor, equipment and materials required to complete lead service line replacement on private property. All work shall be installed according to GCWW Rules & Regulations. A copy of GCWW Rules & Regulations can be found on our website at: https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/water/engineering-construction/forms-specifications/ Plumber must use trenchless construction
methods (i.e. cable pulling method or piercing/missile method) whenever possible to install the new copper service line. This method is preferred to keep cost low and to avoid additional cost in restoration. If trenchless construction method is not possible then an open cut trench method may be performed. New copper service line must be installed from the property line (curb stop valve location) to approximately 6-inches beyond the outlet valve of the meter setting in the house/building (or if exterior meter exists, to the first interior valve inside the house/building). The work will also include installing a new meter setting. Plumber will be responsible to patch any hole in the foundation floor or wall that was required to install the new copper service line. All excavations on private property must be backfilled with excavated spoils and include no less than 12-inches of topsoil. All impacted lawn areas shall receive seed and straw during the growing season. Any paved surface area removed on private property to complete the work shall be restored with asphalt/cold patch.

What happens if a property owner has a dispute over work performed or damages by the plumber?
GCWW will investigate claims raised by the property owner. If the issue is an obligation of the plumber under its contract with GCWW, GCWW will work with the plumber to resolve the problem. Otherwise, GCWW will work with the property owner to resolve the problem. The City of Cincinnati has an Office of Administrative Hearings to provide customers an opportunity to file claims and receive a third-party review and ruling. If need, GCWW will utilize this office to review and decide claims.

Has this new Lead Service Line Replacement Program started?
Yes, GCWW started sending letters/contracts to customers December 22, 2017. Data related to this start follows.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>As of April 9, 2018</th>
<th>262 contracts have been sent to customers</th>
<th>92 customers have signed and returned contracts</th>
<th>35% return of contracts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional 20 customers have contacted GCWW to join program</td>
<td>These 20 customers will be sent to plumbers on the pre-qualified list for quotes to be submitted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional contracts will be sent to customers; more quotes will be needed from plumbers.</td>
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