



## COMING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT AND SOLVE NEWARK'S WATER CHALLENGE

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### Overview

Like many cities and towns across New Jersey, and America, Newark is plagued by aging infrastructure. This includes 18,000 privately-owned lead service lines that connect city water into homes. A corrosion control treatment (orthophosphate) is introduced into the water at the two reservoirs that feed Newark – the Wanaque and the Pequannock – to keep lead from leeching into the water from lead service lines. Last year Newark learned that the corrosion control treatment in use in the Pequannock was no longer effective, impacting roughly 15,000 homes. Only homes built before 1986, when a federal law banned lead pipes, are impacted. A lead service line is only inches in diameter, so apartment buildings, commercial spaces, and restaurants are not affected.

There is a short, mid, and long-term plan of action that the City has been following since last year. In the short-term, 38,000 Pur water filters were distributed free of charge to residents. In the mid-term, a new corrosion control treatment was introduced into the Pequannock in May, and will take six to eight months to optimize. For the long-term, the City started a lead service line replacement program, with a commitment to replace every line in the city at almost no cost to homeowners. This required working with the legislature to change the law, since it was illegal for the City to replace private property. The State of New Jersey also committed some funding to the program, and to date 700 lines have been replaced with the program moving in phases. The cost of this work is \$8,000 to \$10,000 per line.

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, the City and the Department of Environmental Protection conducted testing and found that in two of three homes, the Pur water filters were not removing lead from the water. While this is too small of a sample size to make a definitive conclusion about whether or not the filters are effective, in an abundance of caution, the City is providing all potentially impacted residents with bottled water and established four distribution sites.

While the City works aggressively with State and Federal officials on our water quality, we are grateful to institutions and philanthropies who have stepped up to support Newark residents. Here are ways to help:

### Short-Term Needs

- ✓ **Contribute money to support the purchase of water** – The City of Newark partnered with the United Way of Essex West Hudson and the Community Food Bank of New Jersey to create a Water Fund. 100% of funds raised from individuals, corporations, and foundations is being used to purchase bottled water for residents.
- ✓ **Leverage distributor relationships to contribute water** – The Community Food Bank of New Jersey is able to accept large donations of bottled water. Some anchor institutions have leveraged their supplier networks to make direct, in-kind donations of water.
- ✓ **Deploy employee volunteers** – The City is currently staffing four water distribution sites. Some volunteers are needed to help residents carry water to their cars. With larger-scale volunteer efforts, we can deliver water directly to affected neighborhoods, particularly to the elderly and families with young children.

### Long-Term Solutions

- ✓ **Partner with the City to identify additional capital that accelerates lead service line replacement** – The only permanent solution to this issue is to replace every lead service line in the city, a program underway. Capital is needed to cover the full program, and even accelerate replacement.

***To support these efforts, please contact:***

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