



FY2024 Annual LPPA Reporting

Newport Water Department Annual Reporting for LPPA

Date:	August 15, 2024	70 Halsey Street, Newport, RI 02840
Subject:	FY2024 RIDOH LPPA Annual Reporting	United States
Attention:	Director of RIDOH	T +1 .401.845.5600
Company:	Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH)	www.cityofnewport.com
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PWSID	RI1592010	
Copies to:	Governor, the President of the Rhode Island State Senate, the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, and the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank	

1. Background

The City of Newport, Department of Utilities Water Division (NWD) is conducting a program to address revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule (LCRR) promulgated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other requirements specified by the State of Rhode Island. This document addresses reporting requirements for the State of Rhode Island as described below.

The EPA's LCRR requires the NWD (PWSID RI1592010) to prepare and submit an initial lead service line inventory by October 16, 2024. The federal requirements also include identifying and notifying consumers of lead service lines (LSLs) and galvanized requiring replacement service lines, and unknown service line materials. Additional forthcoming federal requirements, under the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements, are anticipated later this year and will include additional provisions.

In addition, State House Bill No. RI H5007, Lead Poisoning Prevention Act or LPPA, was signed by the Governor on June 24, 2023 and established additional requirements. As part of the LPPA requirements, public water systems (PWS) in Rhode Island must submit an annual report with information about their service line inventories and lead service line replacement (LSLR) statuses to the Governor, the President of the Rhode Island State Senate, the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, the Director of RIDOH, and the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB). Starting in 2024, the annual report is due within 90 days of the end of each fiscal year (June 30). PWSs that have not begun inventory and replacement work can voluntarily submit a report for the year 2023 indicating that they are in the process of planning for future work.

Based on the LPPA requirements, the report must contain information, including, but not limited to: the number of public service lines per community served and the number replaced; the number of private service lines per community served and the number replaced; an estimated number of service lines to be replaced; property type; number of private service line inspections conducted; and annual expense to replace service lines.

The LPPA annual reporting requirements for NWD are detailed in the following sections of the report, as shown in Table 1, covering fiscal year 2024 activities from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Table 1. LPPA Requirements and Corresponding Section in the Report

LPPA Requirement	Section in the Report
Number of public service lines per community served and number of private service lines per community served	Section 2
Number of private service line inspections conducted and the property type	Section 3
Number of public service lines replaced, and number of private service lines replaced	Section 4
Estimated number of service lines to be replaced	Section 4
Annual expense to replace service lines	Section 4

2. Lead Service Line Inventory Status

Per the LCRR and Rhode Island LPPA legislation, the NWD is using the following sources of information to develop the initial lead service line inventory:

- Over 30,000 records for water service customer signup and connection drawings were reviewed.
- Over 200 pages of historical as-built and construction drawings were reviewed.
- Over 500 water service renewal applications since 2018 were reviewed.
- Visual inspection during planned maintenance such as backflow prevention inspections or meter, service line, or main repairs or replacements.
- Comments, complaints, and other input from customers in the service area that PWS receives through solicitation such as a survey form.

To address these requirements, NWD is using multiple data streams to inform and develop the LSL inventory. Records from the NWD are examined first and if the records are incomplete, inconsistent, or cannot be verified, the next steps are customer self-reporting surveys and field identification. Under the RIDOH requirements, the definition of lead service lines includes service lines with galvanized steel or iron.¹ As a result, the inventory and replacement tables in the report refer to lead and galvanized service lines as a single category. A summary of NWD's service line material classifications for both the public and privately-owned portions are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Number of NWD Owned and Privately Owned Service Line Materials

Classification	Material	Number of Service Lines
NWD Owned Service Line Material	Lead Status Unknown	2,643
	Non-Lead	10,891
	Lead / Galvanized	1,423
	Total	14,957
Customer-Owned Service Line Material (Private)	Lead Status Unknown	6,744
	Non-Lead	7,582
	Lead / Galvanized	629
	Total	14,955

¹ Galvanized steel or iron pipes that are cement-lined should not be considered lead service lines. While galvanized pipes can accumulate lead over time if they were ever downstream of a lead pipe, the cement lining acts as a barrier, preventing direct contact between the water and the metal pipe surface. This lining significantly reduces the potential for lead leaching into the water supply.

3. Service Line Inspections

To address material types not available through records research, and to confirm the accuracy of available records, NWD is employing the following field inspection methods:

- Visual inspection during planned maintenance, meter replacement, and water main replacement projects
- An online self-reporting survey for customers to identify their private service lines and report results to the NWD. In conjunction with the self-reporting survey efforts, NWD staff are also placing door hangers for informing the customers and offering visual inspections to customers who opt in for NWD to identify their service line material on private property.
- NWD is conducting a pilot study on vacuum excavations for both NWD and private portions of the service line material. The investigations completed to-date has been schools and childcare facilities (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. Vacuum Excavation Performed at a Newport School Building



Table 3 summarizes the number of field inspections performed by NWD during the annual reporting period for the customer-owned portion of the service line as required by the LPPA. RIDOH has clarified that the associated property type should be reported based on the private side service lines being inspected and this information is also included in Table 3 based on the property types referenced in the RIDOH state-specific inventory template.

Table 3. Number of Customer-Owned Service Lines Inspected and Associated Property Type

Classification	Number of Service Lines Inspected
Customer-Owned Service Lines (Private)	415
Property Type	Number of Service Lines Inspected
Single Family Residence	265
Multi Family Residence	89

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Property Type	Number of Service Lines Inspected
Commercial	37
Elementary School	11
Secondary School	4
Childcare Facility	2
Public	7
Hospital or Medical Care Facility	0

4. LSL Replacement Activity and Expenses

Based on the inventory results to date, NWD has developed a planning level cost estimate for a system-wide lead service line replacement program, which projects overall cost to be between \$87M and \$104M. While NWD is committed to complying with state and federal regulations, NWD does not have the resources to fund this large-scale program at this time as the NWD's LSLR program is contingent upon available RIIB funding. In order to complete system-wide replacements within the State's 10-year replacement period, NWD will require funding assistance from the State.

NWD has submitted a draft lead service line replacement plan to RIDOH via email on June 20, 2024. Since the NWD's initial service line inventory contains lead status unknown service lines on both NWD and private sides, there is an additional category "Estimated Number of Service Lines to be Replaced" based on the assumptions of 14% of current unknowns being lead for NWD-owned portion and 20% lead for the privately-owned portion. Table 4 describes the number of LSLs replaced in the FY24 period, confirmed and estimated number of LSLs, the total estimated LSLs to be replaced, and associated annual expense to replace the LSLs in the NWD system.

The affordability of water and wastewater services is a critical issue, especially as costs continue to rise. The NWD believes that relying solely on rates to fund these services may soon limit their affordability for a significant portion of the population. This raises concerns surrounding equity, access, and public health.

Increasing rates will be required for aspects of the LSLR program and would be crucial for Newport to meet the ten-year replacement requirement. However, the LSLR program is not the only factor affecting rates. Various issues, such as inflation, emerging contaminants, climate change, and infrastructure gaps, are putting a financial strain on the utility.

Under current guidelines, the projected costs of NWD's lead service line replacement program are expected to result in water and wastewater costs reaching nearly 10% of total household income for the lowest income quintile (LQI) customers in Newport. We believe that this significant financial burden calls for the prompt consideration of additional funding sources to alleviate the strain on these customers. It is crucial to find equitable solutions that address the affordability issue without compromising the quality and safety of the water supply.

Table 4. LSL Replacement Status, Estimated Future Replacements and Expenses

Classification	Number of LSLs Replaced in FY24	Confirmed Number of LSLs Remaining to be Replaced	Estimated Number of LSLs to be Replaced	Total Estimated LSLs Remaining to be Replaced *	Estimated Annual Expense to Replace Remaining LSLs (\$) **
NWD Owned Service Lines	53	1,423	370	1,793	-
Customer-Owned Service Lines	103	629	1,348	1,977	-
TOTAL	156	2,052	1,718	3,770	\$9.8M

* Contingent upon funding from the RIIB.

** Projected annual expense starting from FY24 through FY33