

A Critical Opportunity to Protect Americans: Funding Lead Service Line Replacement

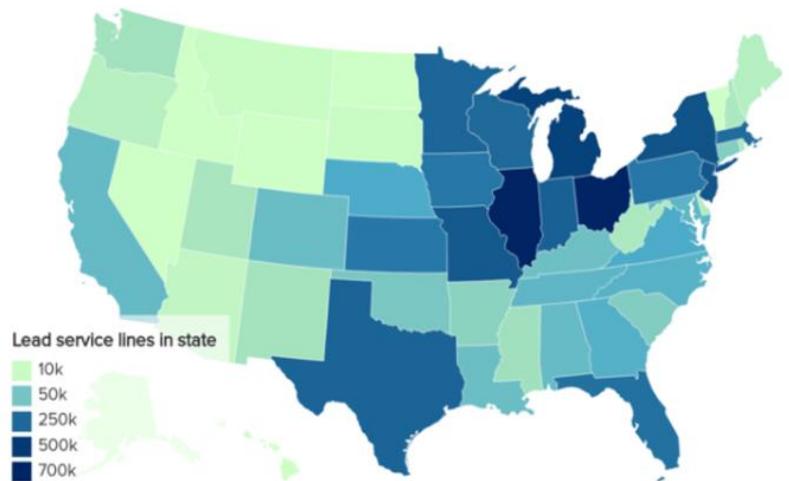
There is no safe level of lead exposure, which can harm children's brain development and lead to learning problems and put adults at higher risk of hypertension and heart disease.

Now, more than ever, families should not have to worry about whether their drinking water is harming their health.

Lead pipes are a threat to kids across the country.

More than 9 million homes in America still get their water from lead service lines. These are the [lead pipes](#) connecting their home to the drinking water main in the street — exposing millions of children and adults to the myriad harms associated with lead.

From rural towns to large cities, **more than 11,000 communities** still have lead service lines (LSLs). And existing programs typically rely on homeowners to pay to have their lead pipe replaced — posing a [major equity concern](#).



CBS News, Adapted from American Water Works Association

An update made to the federal rule regulating lead in drinking water by the former administration **is insufficient** for the country to make meaningful progress on lead pipe replacement.

Funding lead pipe replacement is critical to tackle the country's toxic legacy of lead.

A \$45 billion [investment in lead pipe replacement](#) over ten years would:

- **Protect public health** by enabling water systems around the country to quickly begin eliminating the LSLs to protect residents.
- **More than pay for itself.** Fully replacing lead service lines across the country would yield more than [\\$205 billion in societal benefits](#) over 35 years — a 450% return on the investment — due to prevented heart disease deaths from adult lead exposure.
- **Permanently upgrade infrastructure** by facilitating critical upgrades to water distribution systems in a way that protects residents from increased lead in their drinking water when the LSL is disturbed.
- **Reduce disparities** by enabling utilities to fully replace LSLs, thereby resolving equity concerns that utilities currently face in replacing the lead pipe on private property.
- **Create jobs** for the plumbers and contractors who will perform the LSL replacements. This is shovel-ready work that involves construction and plumbing crews conducting the replacement.