

October 2024

ADVOCACY UPDATE

EPA Unveils Historic Lead Pipe Replacement Rule

On Tuesday, October 8, the Biden-Harris' Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) made two announcements that will impact the U.S. water system landscape for years to come:

1. A final rule requiring drinking water systems across the country to identify and replace lead pipes within 10 years; and
2. \$2.6 billion in newly available drinking water infrastructure funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

Context

In December 2023, the EPA requested comment on the proposed Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI), which informed the revisions to the National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) for lead and copper. After consideration of public comment, the EPA is finalizing revisions to the NPDWR for lead and copper. In this rule, the agency is finalizing requirements for drinking water systems to replace lead and certain galvanized service lines. This final rule is meant to strengthen corrosion control treatment, public education and consumer awareness, requirements for small systems, and sampling in schools and childcare facilities.

Implications for AMPP Members

- The LCRI lowers the lead action level to 10 µg/L, requiring more water systems to take action sooner to control corrosion and provide public education.
- Water systems must begin complying with the provisions of the LCRI three years following the publication of the final rule in the Federal Register (expected to be late 2027).
- Beyond the \$2.6 billion in funding made available in October 2024, the BIL provides an additional \$11.7 billion in general supplemental funding through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program, which can also be utilized for corrosion control treatment and lead service line removal projects.

EPA Takeaways on LCRI

1. Lead in drinking water irreparably harms the health of children and adults and disproportionately impacts lower-income communities and communities of color.
2. The Lead and Copper Rule Improvements strengthen nationwide requirements to protect Americans from lead in drinking water.
3. The health and economic benefits of the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements exceed the costs by more than tenfold.

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4. Thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and funding programs like the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), more federal funding has never been available to support lead pipe removal projects.

Helpful Links

- [EPA Press Release](#)
- [LCRI Rule Text as found in Federal Register](#)
- [Preliminary FY 2025 Allotments for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund \(SRF\) General Supplemental Provisions of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)

Stay informed and contact our regulatory affairs team at [Government Affairs - AMPP](#) or [Kern Williams](#).

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