Exposure to lead can have devastating health consequences. Lead in drinking water poses a significant, complicated public health concern for people today. The safest solution—removal of lead pipes, fixtures and solder—requires extensive planning, capital investment, staff capacity and time. That daunting list can discourage action. Yet, lead must be addressed. There are many immediate actions a community can take, even as it begins planning for a more systemic, long-term solution. Whether or not your community has lead service lines, all municipal leaders can take action today to ensure the safety of residents.

**TAKE ACTION TODAY**

The following actions are designed to assist community leaders and staff in protecting citizens and building public trust on lead issues and actions.

- **Communicate with your community**
  
  Begin a transparent dialog that is open, consistent, accessible and ongoing with residents and businesses about lead in drinking water. Host public meetings and send factual and useful information out to all residents on what they can do to protect themselves, including what is entailed in replacing a lead service line.

- **Distribute water filters + post clear signage**
  
  Provide or subsidize the cost of water filters that assist with lead-removal. And inform the public whether or not a public drinking water facility (such a water fountain) has been tested, and what the results were.

- **Provide free lead testing program**
  
  Ensure that water testing is easy, dependable and equitably promoted within your municipality to all residents. Publicly report these results on a regular basis—this includes water quality results as well as performance of the testing program itself—both help build transparency and trust. Consider sharing the cost of such a program with neighboring communities.

- **Determine where lead service lines are**
  
  Complete a lead service line inventory and digitally map within your community. Based off these findings, identify critical areas of focus e.g., lower income-households living in older homes and buildings.

More actions on the next page!
Lead service line replacement is a daunting task, however, there are a number of actions every community can take today that will increase safety, build public trust and set your community on a path toward a comprehensive lead removal plan.

For more information, contact Danielle Gallet at the Metropolitan Planning Council at dgallet@metroplanning.org.

For more than 80 years, MPC has worked to make Northeastern Illinois a more equitable, sustainable and prosperous region. By partnering with businesses, communities and governments, we work to address today’s urgent problems while consistently thinking ahead to prepare the region for the needs of tomorrow.