

# OneFAB

Information Delivered on One Page, Front And Back

Lead Service Lines and Where to Find Them

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## Introduction

The Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's (EGLE's) Drinking Water and Environmental Health Division is responsible for monitoring and enforcing drinking water standards in Michigan. One program that allocates much of the funding for these projects is the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. Historically, lead service lines (LSLs) projects were not counted separately from other drinking water projects. This has changed in recent years, as the issue has drawn more attention both locally and nationally, and since 2021 EGLE has been tracking LSL-specific spending.

## Drinking Water Standards

Drinking water standards are set broadly by the Environmental Protection Agency. Additional standards are implemented by states, and in Michigan many standards are derived from the State's Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). The LCR serves to safeguard public health by reducing the levels of lead and copper in drinking water. The primary sources of lead and copper contamination in drinking water are the corrosion of plumbing materials containing these elements. The rule establishes action levels (ALs) for lead and copper based on the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of tap water samples. While an action level exceedance (ALE) does not constitute a violation, it triggers additional requirements aimed at minimizing exposure to lead and copper in drinking water. These requirements encompass water quality parameter monitoring, corrosion control treatment, source water monitoring/treatment, public education, and lead service line replacement. All community water supplies<sup>1</sup> and nontransient noncommunity water supplies<sup>2</sup> are subject to the LCR regulations.

The LCR was strengthened in 2018 under the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act, with LSLs playing a pivotal role in this enhancement. The amended rules mandate that community water supplies with LSLs conduct lead and copper monitoring by sampling both the first and fifth liters from the faucet. This modification aims to provide a more accurate representation of the lead exposure risk faced by Michigan residents by incorporating water that has likely been present in the service line immediately before sampling. Michigan's LCR also requires communities to replace an average of 5% of their total LSLs annually, leading to a complete replacement within 20 years. In cases where a water supply exceeds the AL for lead even after implementing optimal corrosion control treatment designed to minimize lead leaching, the replacement rate must be increased to 7% per year until two consecutive monitoring periods yield samples below the ALE.

## Recent Expenditures

Tables 1 and 2 below show the funding allocations, or expected allocations, from EGLE specifically for LSL replacement alongside the number of LSLs replaced. Because there was a large influx of funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and matching funds from the State, increasingly more funding has been directed to Michigan's State Revolving Fund in each of the last three years.

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<sup>1</sup> Community water supplies are defined by EGLE as serving either a municipality or at least 14 residential units.

<sup>2</sup> Nontransient noncommunity water supplies are defined by EGLE as serving at least 25 people for at least 6 months out of the year, such as schools or daycares.

**Table 1**

Fiscal Year	LSL Spending
2021	\$138,675,063
2022	267,474,000
2023	114,900,000
2024	91,632,300
2025	118,901,300
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$761,582,663</b>

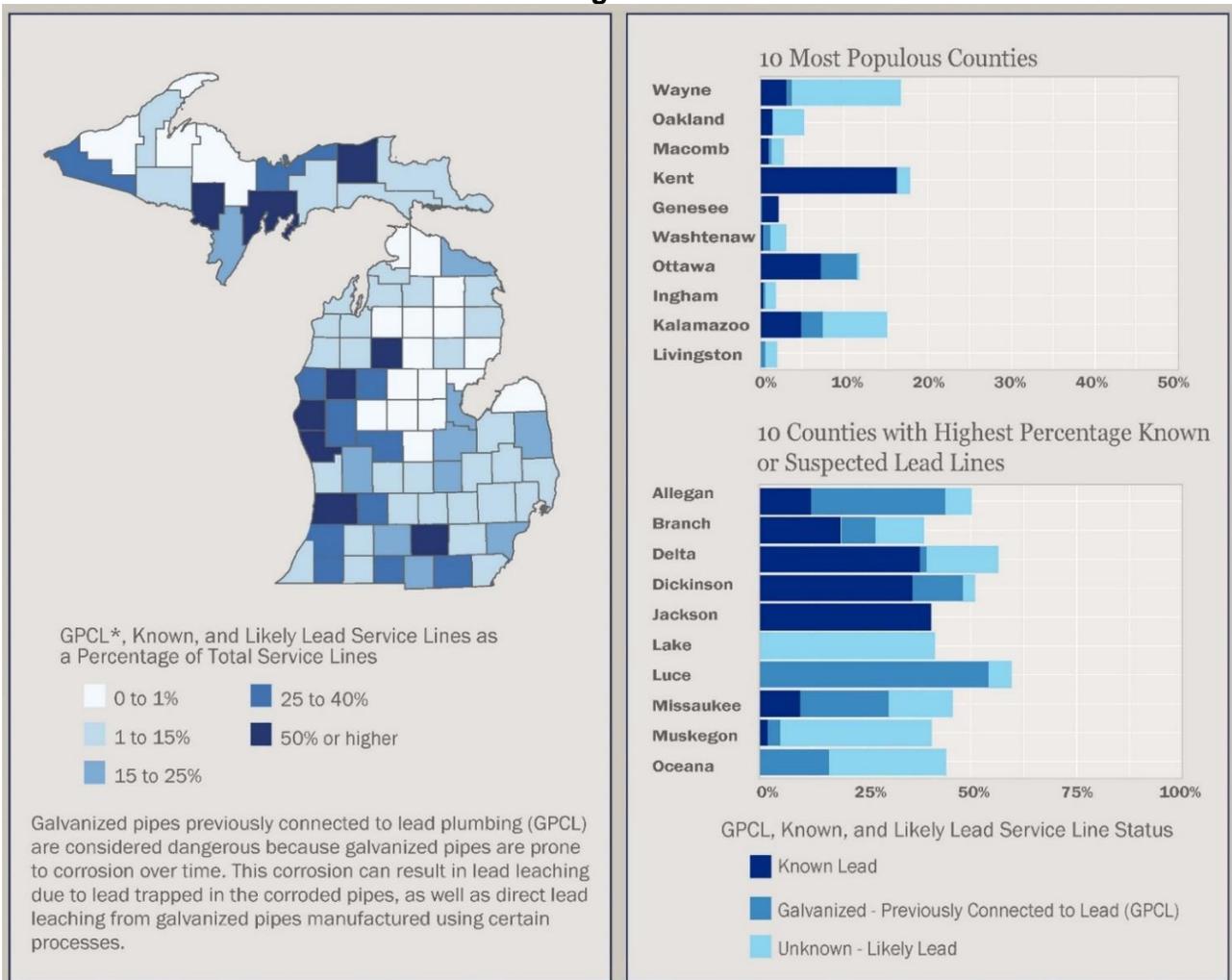
**Table 2**

Year	LSL and GPCL Replaced
2021	10,316
2022	16,392
2023	18,699
2024	7,000
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>52,407</b>

Moving Forward

Municipal reports from 2020 indicate that nearly 2.6 million lead or galvanized-previously connected to lead (GPCL) lines remain in Michigan. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of known, GPCL, or unknown but likely LSLs reported by county. Since many more lines have unknown materials, it is very likely there are more problematic lines. Estimates from EGLE indicate that replacing a single line costs about \$10,000. In fiscal year 2024-25, the budget allocated \$13.6 million and \$43.3 million one-time from the State’s General Fund specifically for LSL replacement as part of a targeted ongoing effort. This ongoing issue requires concerted efforts, especially as Federal funding diminishes.

**Figure 1**



Source: EGLE, “Preliminary Distribution System Materials Inventories Summary”.