



February 8th, 2023

TO: House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee

FROM: Carly Griffith, Water Program Director, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

RE: Building Codes Legislation

Chair Hansen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your service to the people of Minnesota and thank you for the opportunity to testify on HF 24 (Jordan). Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) is a nonprofit organization with almost 50 years of experience using law and science to protect Minnesota's environment and the health of its people.

MCEA supports the grant program for lead service line replacement as outlined in HF 24. Childhood lead poisoning is a public health crisis that we must act quickly to address. For children under 6 years of age, lead exposure can lead to lifelong health impacts that include damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, and behavioral problems. As a community advocate in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, I saw firsthand the impact this public health crisis has on families. I talked to mothers whose children were hospitalized for high blood lead levels, who had to tirelessly advocate for their children to get the resources they needed to deal with related cognitive and behavioral issues in school, and who then became community leaders to ensure that other children didn't have to face what their children did.

Here in Minnesota, we need to get ahead of the problem while we have the resources to do so. This grant program will allow us to tackle one of the primary sources of lead exposure in our state, which is the lead pipes that deliver drinking water to our homes. A general fund appropriation for this grant program will allow us to maximize the federal funds for lead service line replacement and ensure that we are able to meet the goal to replace all drinking water service lines in the state by 2033.

Residential lead service lines are divided into publicly and privately-owned portions, with the public side owned by municipalities and the private side owned by homeowners. One of the challenges with lead service line replacement is to coordinate funds to ensure that the public and privately-owned portions of the pipe can be replaced at the same time. Not only is it much more cost effective to replace both at the same time, but partial replacements can actually increase the risk of lead exposure and "may be linked to increased incidence of high blood levels in children."

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention. August 18, 2021.
https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/resources/default.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fnceh%2Flead%2Fwaterlines.htm

This bill addresses that challenge in two ways: first, it requires that at least 70% of the grant funds are used to replace privately owned portions of lead drinking water service lines. This is critical because the private side cost share is often the greatest obstacle to coordinated lead service line replacement, and this grant program will provide the necessary resources to allow for coordinated replacement at a neighborhood or census block scale. Second, the grant program prioritizes applications that identify how the recipient will coordinate the removal of the publicly and privately owned portions of the lead lines and minimize the number of lead lines that are only partially removed.

Lead contamination is an environmental justice issue that disproportionately affects lower-income families and communities of color, where decades of disinvestment have led to critical infrastructure needs, poorer health outcomes, and less economic opportunity. MCEA commends the inclusion of grant criteria to prioritize lead service line replacement for lower-income residents and those from other disadvantaged communities that are at the greatest risk for lead exposure. It also commends the requirement for applicants who serve large customers bases to incorporate workplans that maximize the participation of those from under-represented populations in the construction industry, and for all laborers and mechanics to be paid the prevailing wage rate for their work. Other opportunities for workforce development could include lead paint abatement—this would build on the lead service line replacement work and address another critical pathway for lead exposure in infants and young children.

Finally, the lead service line mapping grants included in this bill are a critical step to ensure that we have up to date inventories of drinking water service lines and can prioritize replacement in the areas of greatest need.

HF 24 contains multiple strategies that are necessary to combat the public and environmental health crisis of lead contamination, such as geospatial inventories of drinking water service lines across the state; grants that allow for the coordinated replacement of lead service lines and address obstacles for the private side cost share; and the workforce development component that will help Minnesota reinvest in the communities where this work is done.

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Representative Rick Hansen
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February 8, 2023

Dear Chair Hansen and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share The Nature Conservancy's support for HF24, which would fund a grant program to replace lead service lines and establish a state goal to remove all lead services lines by 2033.

The Nature Conservancy's mission is to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends so that nature and people can thrive. Clean drinking water is fundamental to people, communities, and public health. While our organization works to address water quality and quantity issues around the state, those efforts must be matched by ensuring water at Minnesotans' taps is safe to drink. The health impacts of lead in drinking water are well-known and fall disproportionately on low-income children and communities.

While the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) made funds available for inventories, mapping, and replacement of lead pipes, the need exceeds current federal funding. The State has an opportunity to match federal investments and act to address the problem quickly and at scale.

Thank you for considering HF24 and your work on behalf of Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Pinkalla
Government Relations Director
The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota

Molly Jansen
Government Relations Specialist
The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota

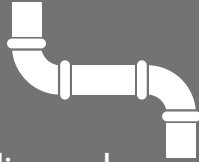
FIND AND REPLACE ALL RESIDENTIAL LEAD SERVICE LINES HF24/SF30

THE ASK

Inventory and replace all residential lead service lines in Minnesota by 2033.

- \$80M per year for 10 years for lead line replacement
- \$10M to provide grants to cities and other public water suppliers to inventory lines

The revised EPA Lead and Copper Rule requires all municipalities to map lead services lines by 2024.



The estimated need to inventory and replace all lead service lines in Minnesota by 2033 is

\$800 MILLION.¹

LEAD LINES ARE A STATEWIDE ISSUE

With housing built before the 1940s located throughout Minnesota, there is a great need to map and remove lead lines in both the Metro and Greater Minnesota. Cities such as St. Paul, Royalton, Moorhead, and Duluth have all identified lines needing to be replaced.



The Minnesota Department of Health found removing lead from drinking water would improve population-level mental acuity and IQ and increase productivity, benefitting the Minnesota economy an estimated

\$4.2 - \$8.5 BILLION over 20 years.²



If the Legislature fails to adequately fund lead service lines mapping and replacement programs,

LEAD CONTAMINATION WILL CONTINUE

- Federal resources will not cover all inventory and replacement costs
- Some federal resources are available only as loans, which many communities and residents cannot afford
- Communities will have trouble meeting the EPA's 2024 inventory deadline
 - There is an estimated 100,000 - 260,000 lead lines currently in Minnesota delivering drinking water to homes.⁴
- Some communities will only be able to replace the public portion of lead lines, not the entire line

Studies estimate replacing lead service pipes in Minnesota will create around

2,400 JOBS annually for 10 years.³



The Center for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics acknowledge there is

NO SAFE LEVEL OF LEAD EXPOSURE for children.⁵



The only way to permanently protect drinking water from lead is to remove old lead pipes and fixtures.

For more information, contact Nels Paulsen: ☎ 608-469-5299 ✉ nels@conservationminnesota.org

1. [Testimony by Tannie Eshenaur from MDH in the House Capital Investment Committee March 3, 2022](#)

2. [MDH, Lead in Minnesota Water \(2019\)](#)

3. [Getting the Lead Out: Employment & Economic Impacts from Replacing America's Lead Pipe, August 2021](#)

4. [MDH, Lead in Minnesota Water \(2019\)](#)

5. [American Academy of Pediatrics, Prevention of Childhood Lead Toxicity: Policy Statement](#)



**CONSERVATION
MINNESOTA**

February 8, 2023,

Chair Hansen and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee,

We write today to ask for your support for HF 24 (Jordan), providing funding to remove toxic lead service lines for all Minnesotans by 2033.

At Conservation Minnesota, we're dedicated to protecting the people and the places that Minnesotans love. Ending toxic lead exposure is central to this mission.

Every day, hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans receive their drinking water from aging lead service lines, which allow dissolved lead to enter the bloodstream. There is no safe level of lead in drinking water; and even low levels of exposure can lead to long-term, harmful health effects. In children, lead exposure can result in behavior and learning problems, lower IQ, hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems, and anemia. Even in adults, lead can contribute to increased blood pressure, hypertension, decreased kidney function, and reproductive problems. In pregnant women specifically, exposure can lead to reduced growth of the fetus and premature birth. Put simply, the prevalence of lead service lines represents a public health crisis across Minnesota.

Despite the real dangers of lead exposure, Minnesota residents and their communities have been left without the resources necessary to inventory and replace lead service lines. With an estimated cost of about \$10,000 per line, the average Minnesotan cannot afford replacement, leaving countless families at risk. With lines already identified in cities such as St. Paul, International Falls, Royalton, Minneapolis, and Duluth, the total cost to remove all lead service lines in Minnesota is estimated to reach around \$1 billion. And although the IIJA has provided \$215 million in grants and loans to assist with lead service line removal, the outstanding need in Minnesota still sits at about \$800 million.

HF 24 (Jordan) presents a rare opportunity to permanently eliminate the risk posed by lead service lines, at no additional cost to residents. With an \$820 million appropriation, this bill takes bold action to identify and remove every lead service line in Minnesota by 2033. In doing so, HF 24 alleviates a major burden on local communities across the state; protects every Minnesotan from the dangerous, long-term health impacts of toxic lead exposure; and delivers widespread benefits to the state's economy.

On behalf of members in all of Minnesota's 87 counties, Conservation Minnesota thanks Rep. Jordan for championing HF 24 and fighting lead contamination in drinking water. We respectfully urge members to join this fight and to protect their fellow Minnesotans by supporting this vital legislation.

Sincerely,

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Working to protect the Mississippi River
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.

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February 3, 2023

RE: Support for HF 24 – lead service line replacement.

Chair Hansen and members of the committee,

On behalf of Friends of the Mississippi River, I am writing to express our support for HF 24.

Every Minnesotan deserves access to clean, safe drinking water. Unfortunately, though lead was banned for plumbing in 1986, existing lead pipes remain a threat in communities across the state.

Lead exposure causes severe and permanent health and developmental, especially in our young children. Public health experts agree that there is no safe level of lead, and the only way to permanently protect our water is to replace lead service lines and pipes connecting a home or building to the public water main.

Many communities simply need more resources to adequately identify and replace these dangerous pipes. The EPA estimates that lead service line replacement costs can range from \$1,200 to \$12,300 per line¹, putting lead service line replacement out of reach for many households.

As amended, HF 24 sets a statewide lead service line replacement goal and provides much-needed funding to make that possible.

This legislation, paired with unprecedented federal funding support, represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect public health by removing all of Minnesota's lead service lines.

We greatly appreciate Rep. Jordan's strong leadership on this issue and urge you to support HF 24 this session.

Sincerely,

Trevor Russell
Water Program Director
Friends of the Mississippi River

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. October 2019. [Strategies to Achieve Full Lead Service Line Replacement](#). EPA 810-R-19-003



February 7, 2023

Honorable Representative Hansen and
Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee

I am writing to show my strong support for the House File 24 to replace lead service lines. I support the investment in replacing lead service lines in our infrastructure systems. The investment in replacement far outweighs the long-term costs to Minnesotans now and in the future.

My name is Martha Moriarty and I am the executive director of Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota (LDA Minnesota), a nonprofit organization helping individuals of all ages who face learning disabilities and related learning challenges. Our programs reach about 1,500 individuals of all ages across Minnesota each year.

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirm that there is no safe level of lead for children. Scientists find evidence of harm at lower levels of exposure than previously understood, including ADHD and other attention problems, behavior problems, learning disabilities and IQ loss. The EPA has set the maximum contaminant level goal for lead in drinking water at **zero** because lead can be harmful to human health even at any exposure level.

Loss of a few IQ points in children can shift the entire population curve down in learning capacity. Resulting in fewer children in the “gifted” category and more children in the “challenged” category, thereby increasing costs to education. Estimates show a 4-7 point decrease in IQ for every 10 ug/dL increase in blood lead levels.

Prevention is key as it saves in future education costs and healthcare costs. The human and economic impact is much wider than most people think about when you consider the long-term costs of all the things needed to support a person with learning disabilities or other neurological impacts. For example, the cost of educating a child through special education in Minnesota in 2019 ranged anywhere from \$8,890 to \$30,613 per year.

Lead exposure is 100% preventable. I hope you will support House File 24 and reduce lead exposure in drinking water across Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Martha Moriarty
Executive Director, LDA Minnesota
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