New Jersey American Water Begins Lead Service Line Replacement Work in South Orange Village

CAMDEN, N.J. – JAN. 20, 2025 — New Jersey American Water has begun lead service line replacement work in South Orange Village as part of its ongoing commitment to protecting public health and improving drinking water infrastructure. The work, which started today, will progress in phases and supports New Jersey's requirement that all water systems replace lead service lines by 2031.

Following New Jersey American Water's acquisition of South Orange Village's water distribution system in October 2025, the company has been working closely with Village officials to review communications, plan construction activities and establish a comprehensive approach to identifying and replacing lead service lines. As required by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, every property in South Orange Village will be inspected to confirm service line material, even if prior work or meter upgrades have occurred.

"Even if a home has had similar work done in the past, we're still checking every property in South Orange to meet today's standards," said Mike Malloy, senior manager of operations, New Jersey American Water. "By inspecting every property and replacing lead and galvanized lines as we go, we're taking real, visible steps to protect drinking water and reduce unknown service lines across the village."

Once a service line is confirmed to be lead or galvanized steel, the replacement will be scheduled for a future date. While scheduling does not occur immediately following inspection and is completed by a separate crew, the service line replacement work itself is typically completed during a single day. During replacement, customers can expect a temporary water service interruption of approximately four hours. As part of this work in South Orange Village, New Jersey American Water will also install outdoor meter pits at each property to support future meter relocation and improve service efficiency. The utility-owned portion of the service line (from the water main to the curb) and/or the customer-owned portion (from the curb to the home) will be replaced if necessary.

Following construction, temporary restoration is performed immediately to grant safe access to the property. Permanent restoration—including sidewalks, driveways, curbs, and lawns—is weather dependent and may take place weeks or, in some cases, months later, particularly during colder months. Lawn restoration may be delayed until appropriate seasonal conditions return, and restoration work will be coordinated in phases to help ensure quality and durability once conditions allow.

Replacement of lead service lines is funded through New Jersey American Water's Lead Service Line Replacement Charge, a separate surcharge approved by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities that currently appears as a line item on customer water bills. This statewide approach allows New Jersey American Water to recover costs associated with replacing customer-owned lead and galvanized service lines as part of a public health initiative, rather than requiring eligible homeowners to pay a direct, upfront cost for replacement work on private property. Without this approach, individual replacements could cost homeowners thousands of dollars.

New Jersey American Water will continue to provide neighborhood-specific updates as work advances, including advance notice for customers whose properties are scheduled for inspection or replacement. Residents are encouraged to respond promptly to outreach and allow access to their property to support progress toward the statewide 2031 deadline. Additional information and resources about lead service line replacement are available at njamwater.com/leadfacts.

About New Jersey American Water
New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water, is the largest regulated water utility in the state, providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 2.9 million people.

For more information, visit www.newjerseyamwater.com and follow New Jersey American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, and Instagram.

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