



## STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, January 28, 2024

### *There Is No Safe Level of Lead in Our Water*

**“The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed updates to the Safe Drinking Water Act Lead and Copper Rule and is accepting public comments through February 5, 2024....**

Communities around the country are replacing lead service lines, and drinking water systems now have access to \$15 billion in funding through the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.... The EPA has followed through on the commitments in the Biden-Harris Lead Pipes and Paint Action Plan by proposing critical Safe Drinking Water Act revisions....

The pipes that bring water from the large water main pipe into homes and buildings are sometimes made of lead. **Where lead service lines are present, they are the largest source of lead in drinking water.**” (Lynn Thorp, National Campaigns Director, *Clean Water Action*, 1/16/24)

“There is no safe level of lead. Yet, **up to 22 million Americans and possibly more drink tap water served by lead pipes....** The EPA is proposing requirements that ... most lead pipes be replaced within 10 years. But the proposal doesn’t require water utilities to pay for the full lead pipe replacements, allowing them to shift significant costs to individuals. The proposal also will let some cities get more than 10 years to replace their lead pipes if they have a huge number to address. The EPA should strengthen the proposal to ensure equity and that NO ONE has to drink water from a lead pipe....

**Lead harms the developing brain, making it especially dangerous for children and pregnant people. It can also cause fatal heart disease in adults.**

We need the EPA to finalize strong regulations that **ensure replacements of all lead pipes in no more than 10 years**, including in disadvantaged communities and areas most impacted by this health crisis. We also must require water utilities to cover the costs, so we’re not putting that financial burden on low-income homeowners, and to protect renters whose landlords are unlikely to pay the cost of lead pipe replacement....

These regulations are critical for advancing environmental justice... Not only will this help provide Americans with safer water and protect their health, but it will support local economies with the creation of good paying jobs....

**The lead pipe problem is solvable; we just need to act by February 5.** Otherwise, another generation of children will drink contaminated water. We can help end this health crisis by telling the EPA that lead pipes must be replaced, and water utilities must bear the cost.” (Erik Olson, Senior Strategic Director for Health, *Natural Resources Defense Council*, 1/22/24)

[Take 1 minute to submit a comment for safer drinking water NOW.](#)

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at [socialjustice@holycrossphl.org](mailto:socialjustice@holycrossphl.org).