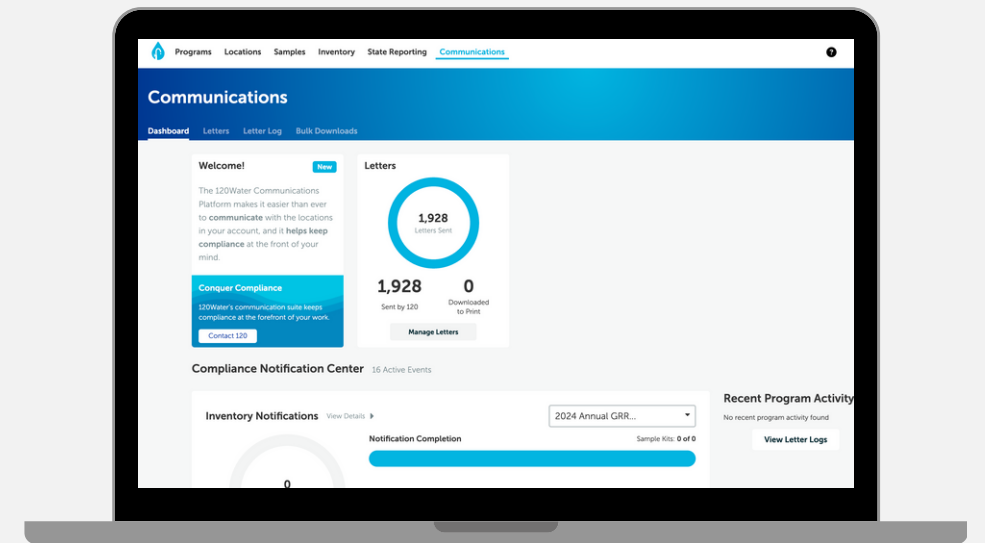




PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Lookbook



INTRODUCTION

Effective communication is essential for water utilities to build trust and empower communities. This look-book highlights best practices for transparent, timely, and engaging outreach to help customers stay informed about their drinking water. From meeting EPA Lead and Copper Rule requirements to fostering awareness and education, discover how 120Water supports utilities in strengthening customer relationships and executing their communication strategies.



FOUNDATIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



Build relationships with the community

Build strong community relationships by engaging at local events, listening to concerns, and partnering with local leaders and organizations.



Personalize when possible

Make communications feel like they're coming from a local utility, not an outside agency.



Use clear, local language

Avoid jargon. “We’re testing water in your neighborhood to make sure it’s safe to drink” is more effective than citing regulation codes.



Be proactive, not reactive

Use proactive communications like Resident Engagement Letters and Annual Notifications to explain what’s happening and “why” before questions come up.



Enhance transparency and accessibility

Communicate transparently about water quality and infrastructure using clear, accessible language, visual aids, and innovative tools to ensure all residents can easily understand and access information.

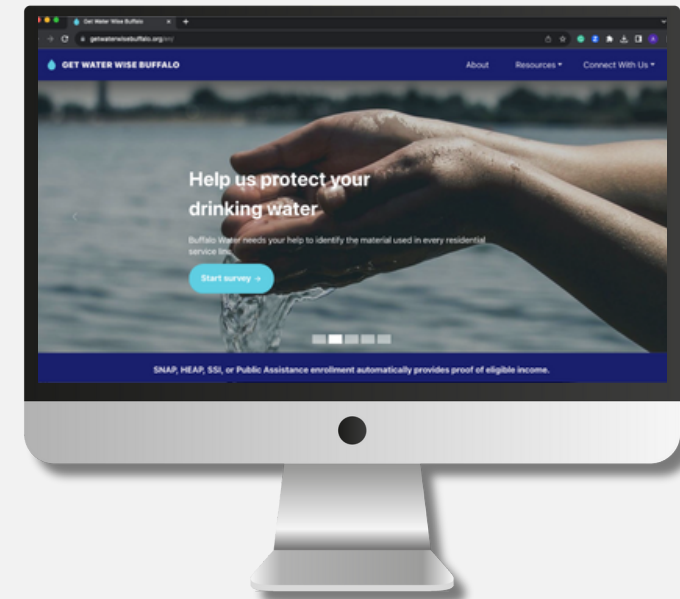
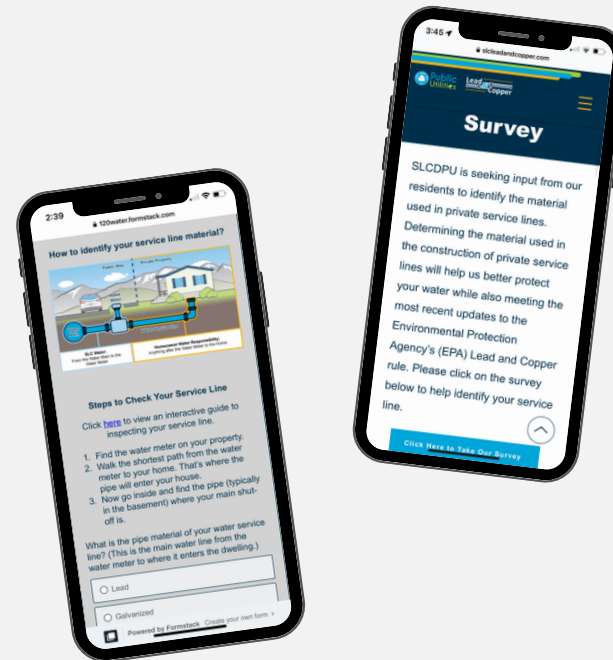
HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Digital

Water utilities can strengthen community engagement by using targeted digital marketing to deliver tailored communication, efficient support, and data-driven strategies with 120Water's cost-effective tools.

Digital Strategies to Implement:

- Email Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Content Marketing
 - Blog Posts and Articles
 - Videos and Infographics
- Webinars and Virtual Events
- Interactive Content
 - Surveys
- Optimizing for Mobile Devices



HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Educational Collateral

120Water helps utilities build trust and lasting relationships by providing EPA-compliant educational materials that empower customers with knowledge before calls to action, which fosters transparency, confidence, and meaningful engagement.

Educational Collateral Examples:

- Potential Health Effects of Lead Exposure
- How to Reduce Lead Exposure
 - Daily/High-Velocity Flushing
- Verifying Your Service Line Materials
- Lead Service Line Removal and Replacement
 - Using Filters and Point-of-Use Devices
- Sampling and Monitoring LSLs
- Health Risks of Lead in School and Childcare Facilities Drinking Water



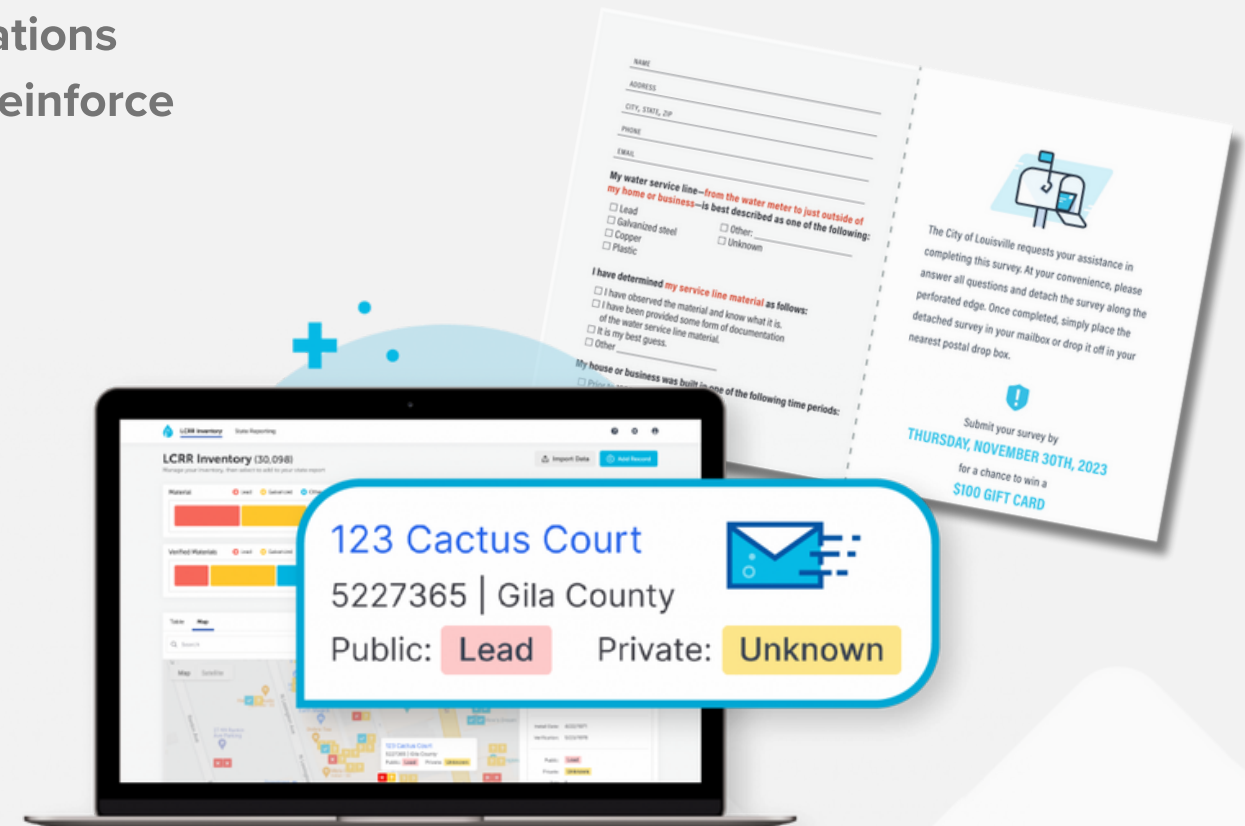
HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Printed Notifications

120Water enhances communication strategies with printed notifications that ensure regulatory compliance, broaden customer reach, and reinforce multi-channel outreach for transparent and inclusive engagement.

120Water has customizable templates you can automate directly within the 120Water platform to save valuable time and resources and meet the LCCR requirements. Customizable templates can include but are not limited to:

- 30-Day and 24-hr Notifications
- Annual Notification Letters
- Verification Call to Actions
- Postcards and Door Hangers



HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Engage Customers Face-To-Face

In-person engagement enables water utilities to build trust and stronger relationships by directly addressing concerns, fostering transparency, and creating meaningful dialogue with their communities.

Ways to Engage with Customers Face-to-Face

- Communities Meetings/Town Halls
- Neighborhood Walks/Door-to-Door Outreach
- Workshops or Information Sessions
- Community Events/Festivals
- Mobile Water Testing Events
- School Outreach Programs



TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

One message won't reach everyone—use multiple channels and reminders.

Best Practices

- **Pair physical letters with digital tools**
 - Add QR codes on verification letters or surveys to link directly to mobile-friendly forms.
- **Send follow-ups**
 - Use follow-up letters or texts to increase response rates. A single mailer often isn't enough.
- **Reinforce messaging across formats**
 - Combine proactive communication like community bulletin mentions with direct mail, emails, and door hangers.



TIPS FOR WATER SYSTEMS WITH LITTLE TO NO BUDGET

Best Practices

- **Prioritize high-ROI channels**
 - Focus your limited time and resources on the communication channels that deliver the greatest impact, such as social media, community bulletin boards, or local radio.
- **Repurpose content across formats**
 - Turn one piece of content into many—adapt a flyer into a social media post, a meeting summary into a newsletter blurb, or an infographic into a handout.
- **Leverage partnerships for extended reach**
 - Work with trusted local organizations, schools, and businesses to share your messages through their networks and amplify your impact at no extra cost.



CREATING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES WITH 120WATER

120Water partners with customers beyond service line inventory development by providing expert compliance guidance, communication best practices, and access to a partner network for effective outreach and community engagement.

To improve your communication strategy, we follow these four key steps:

- 1 Evaluate your current communication strategies.
- 2 Develop a comprehensive plan that emphasizes LCRI compliance and trust building.
- 3 Design communication materials using customized campaigns or 120Water templates.
- 4 Utilize 120Water software to implement your strategies.
Our software can:
 - Distribute your materials (digitally and via USPS)
 - Track and audit your materials
 - Establish public-facing transparency portals.



HOW 120WATER SUPPORTS

Phase 1: Foundation & Data Collection

1. Service Line Verification

Deploy a survey (mail, online) asking customers with *unknown lines* to inspect and submit their service line material.

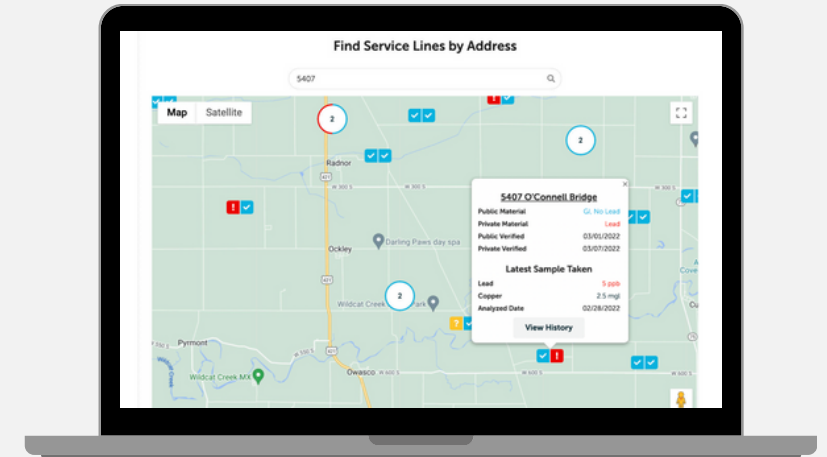
Why: Empowers customers, reduces unknowns, shows proactive engagement.
How 120 help execute the strategy: 120Water postcards, letters with QR codes, door hangers

2. Update Website & Inventory Lookup Tool

Best practice is to ensure your public inventory is:

- Accurate
- Easy to search (by address)
- Includes educational content on types of lines and what they mean

How 120Water helps execute the strategy: 120Water Public Transparency Dashboard

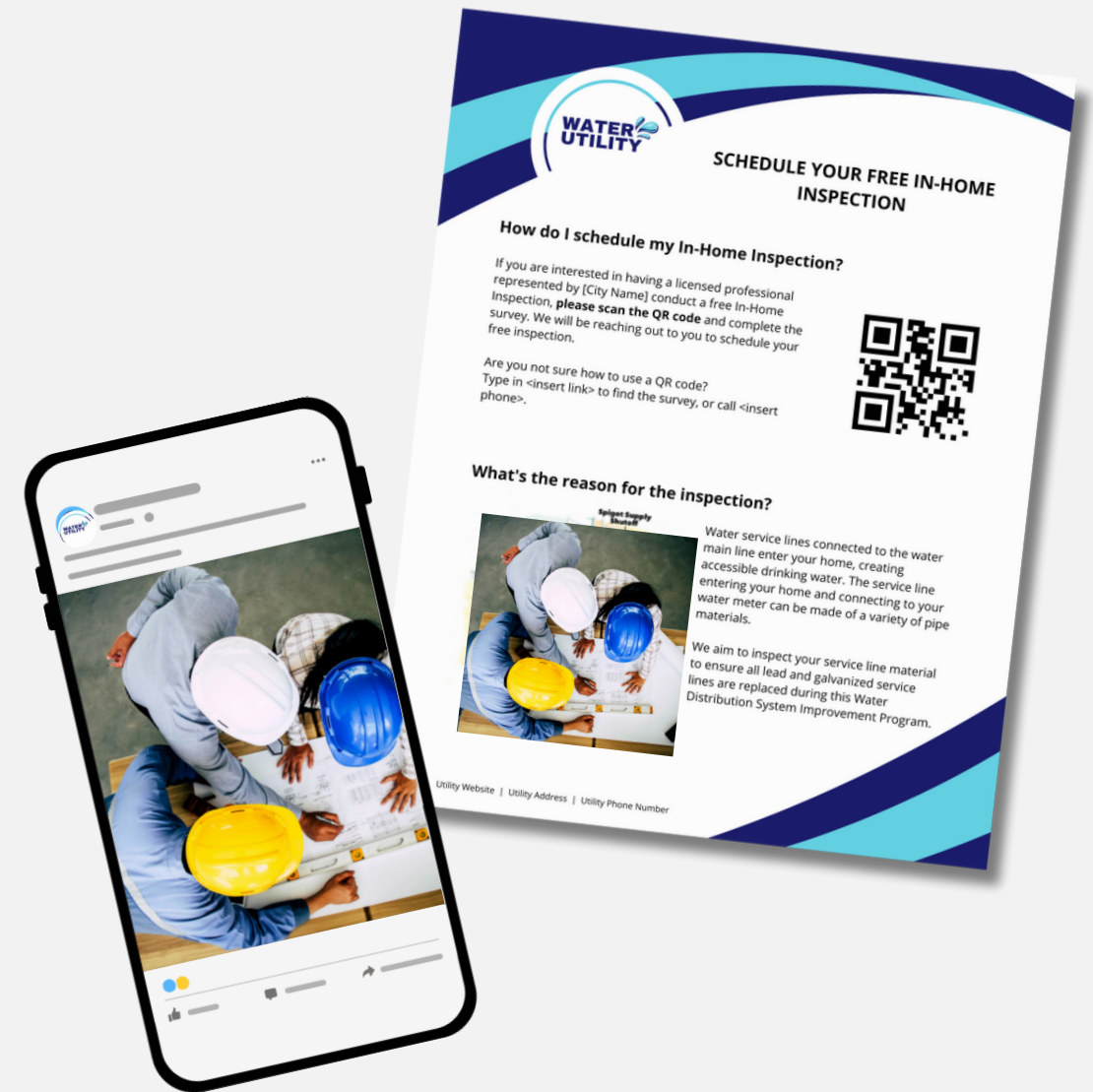


HOW 120WATER SUPPORTS

Phase 2: Pre-Notification Messaging

3. Social Media & Newsletter Campaign

- **Action: Begin posting informational content:**
 - What's a lead service line?
 - Why are some unknown?
 - What is the EPA requiring and why?
- **Why**
 - Educates the community gradually in a non-alarming way
- **How 120 helps execute the strategy**
 - 120Water provided templates that can be customized



FEATURED SUCCESS STORIES



Buffalo Water

Service Connections: 75,000

“Just start somewhere,” and improve as you go! Increased outreach led to increased engagement.

[*Read More*](#)



City of Smyrna, GA

Service Connections: 16,000

Proactive communication and outreach tactics helped provide 1,200% savings in verifying lines.

[*Read More*](#)



City of Gastonia, NC

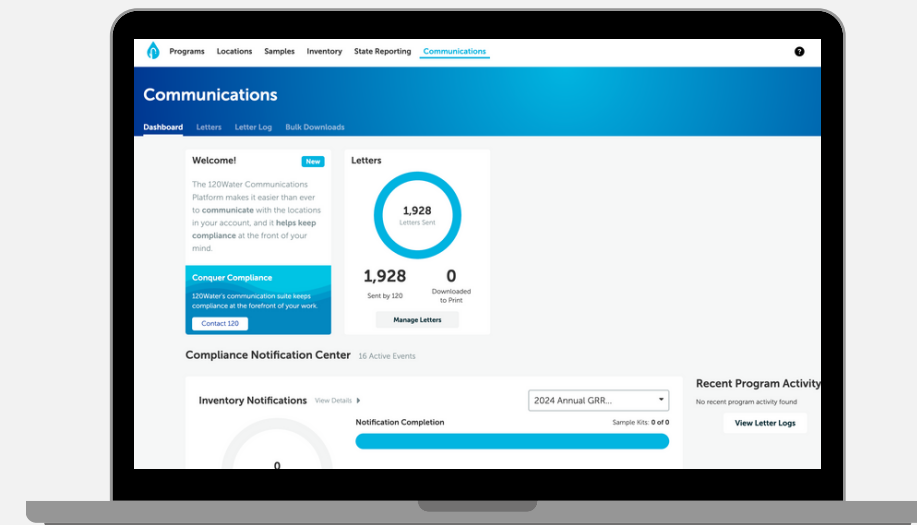
Service Connections: 36,000

“I appreciate [120Water’s] stewardship of this issue. Your guidance has been invaluable.”

[*Read More*](#)



READY TO LEARN MORE?



We're dedicated to developing tools that enable you to manage, create, and track consumer communications. Learn more and request to chat with our state specialist at 120water.com.



120Water™

Make Water Work FOR EVERYONE