



120Water™

# Smyrna, GA Gets Ahead of Lead:

## City saves millions of dollars and prioritizes compliance well in advance of federal deadline

After learning about the daunting Lead and Copper Rule Revisions in late 2020, the City of Smyrna, GA, knew they needed to begin mapping out their service line inventory as soon as possible. Serving a population of 55,000 with 16,000 service connections, Bo Jones, the City's Assistant Director of Public Works, did not want to wait for additional state guidance and risk cutting it close to the federal compliance deadline of October 16, 2024.

120Water was contracted to support the City's inventory development efforts, and after an initial records review, which included GIS and billing data and historical tap cards kept in a filing cabinet, the City was left with about 5,000 unknown service lines, or about one-third of their system. Under LCRR, unknown service lines must be classified as lead until the material of the line can be validated using an accepted method. Thus, the City of Smyrna and 120Water began verifying these unknown service lines using water sampling, specifically a 1st/5th-liter draw.

Sequential sampling allows Smyrna to understand if there is a lead line present on the public or private-owned portions of the line, or both, and is a significantly less invasive method compared to potholing or excavation. Jones knew his community would not be agreeable to their lawns being torn up and wanted to ensure he had the community on his side throughout his inventory efforts.

**450**  
informational  
postcards  
mailed to  
residents

**400**  
1st/5th liter  
sampling kits  
sent to  
residents for  
LSL verification

**1,200%**  
savings using  
verification  
methods vs  
replacing all  
unknowns

Jones also knew it would be important to notify residents of the sampling initiative before simply sending a testing kit to their doorstep, so the 120Water team worked to develop a postcard that is sent out a few weeks prior to the testing kits making them aware of what is to come.

Building a service line inventory is a journey and 120Water has supported Smyrna by:

- **Sending 450 informational postcards to residents prior to sampling**
- **Mailing 400 5-liter testing kits to homes, along with detailed instructions for taking the sample correctly**
- **Working with schools and licensed daycares in their service area to prepare for future facility sampling requirements**
- **Providing 1,200% savings by verifying service line materials rather than assuming replacement for 5,000 lines**



Another concern Smyrna faced was how to fund their inventory development. Soon after hearing about LCRR, Jones met with the mayor and local council to explain the requirements and the impact on public health, and propose funding opportunities. The city created a CIP line item in the budget specifically for Jones' request. Additionally, Jones applied and secured funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which allocated spending toward improving water quality.

A year and a half into their service line project, Smyrna still has a road ahead of them to complete verification, but employing an experienced partner like 120Water will allow them to exceed compliance expectations, save time and financial resources, and have a fully verified inventory prior to the federal deadline.

