WATER MAIN BREAKS

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do water mains break? Water main breaks can occur anytime but more often during the winter months because of the soil movement caused by freezing and thawing of the ground. This puts stress on the water pipes, causing leaks to occur.

What happens once the MUA is notified? MUA personnel assess the situation to determine if it is a water main break. Once we determine it is a break, by law, we must call 811 to request a markout before digging down to expose the main. A markout consists of professional locators marking the location of underground utilities such as; gas, electric, cable, etc., prior to digging. Once markouts are complete they can begin the repair typically within 2 hours.

How is it repaired? The repair crew will determine the most likely point of the leak. Often, where the water is reaching the surface does not indicate where the pipe is leaking. Water can travel far underground before surfacing. Once the leak is located, it is repaired, water service is restored, the hole is backfilled, and the site is cleaned up. Most breaks involve holes or cracks in the pipe caused by the soil, these breaks are repaired using a clamp. Some breaks involve broken valves or require cutting out and replacing a bad section of pipe. These types of repairs typically take longer to identify and complete the repair.

How long do repairs take? Based on the above, repair times can vary. In most cases our crews are able to complete a repair in four to eight hours.

Will my water be shut off? In most cases, the repair is made under reduced pressure. What this means to you is that you will experience low to no water pressure during the repair. During the winter months it doesn’t hurt to have a couple of jugs of water on hand in the event you are affected by a water main break. In over 75% of all cases water service to customers is affected for less than 3 hours.

Will I be notified? We always try to notify every customer affected by the repair. Depending on the situation, we normally issue a *reverse 911 message to landlines and registered cell numbers. If the break occurs late at night and will be repaired before morning, we don’t issue notice.

Why is my water discolored? Once water is restored you may notice discoloration, this is due to disturbing the main. Similar to when we flush, sediment in the main gets stirred up. If you experience discoloration or air in your lines, run the cold water from the highest point in your home until the water runs clear (a bathtub faucet is a good place to run).

If you think you see a water main leak, call our main office at 856-234-0062. We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We will send a crew out to determine if it is a water main leak.

Please remember, our crews are out there working their hardest to get your water restored. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

*Reverse 911—Please note that if you do not have a landline and your cell is not registered, you will not get a message. To register your cell numbers, please visit www.mltmua.com—Resources tab—Local Emergency Links—Notification System—Swift 911