



May 8, 2023

Radhika Fox
Assistant Administrator, Office of Water
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Re: Report to Congress about the 7th Drinking Water Needs Survey

Dear Assistant Administrator Fox,

The Council of Infrastructure Financing Authorities (CIFA), which represents the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs), strongly urges the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to provide a detailed explanation of the lead service line assessment in their upcoming Report to Congress on the 7th Drinking Water Needs Survey (Needs Survey).

CIFA believes it is imperative that Congress, and, more importantly, the American public understand the science used to allot \$12 billion in federal funding to replace lead service lines – the largest appropriation in history to be distributed to the Drinking Water SRFs. To date, no Drinking Water SRF has been able to replicate the numbers calculated by EPA using the press materials and the verbal description of the process provided by EPA before the allotment was released.

Therefore, to foster a greater understanding and acceptance of the allotment, CIFA recommends that EPA provide the following information in its Report to Congress:

- How many service lines, by state, were reported as being lead, galvanized steel, or lead-free.
- How many service lines, by state, were reported as being of unknown material.
- How many service lines, by state, were not reported.
- How EPA reconciled unreported service lines with total number of service lines, by state.
- How many lead service lines, by state, were verified by documentation and how many service lines were estimated, either by the state or utilities.
- The various ways states collected data, including specific methodologies used by states or utilities to estimate the number of lead service lines.
- Specific measures employed by EPA to ensure that these various data collection methodologies didn't unfairly advantage or disadvantage a state.
- Documentation standards used for the lead service line assessment.
- How documentation standards for the lead service line assessment differed from the main Needs Survey.

- Why lead service line replacements projects were counted in both the main Needs Survey and the lead service line assessment.
- A detailed explanation of the methodology, including:
 - How data was collected on small systems and how EPA extrapolated that data for these small systems by state. (Since EPA, not states, collects data on systems with a population of 3,300 or fewer, SRFs don't know how this data impacted their final allotment.)
 - When and how EPA applied weights to extrapolate data for medium sized systems.
 - How EPA projected the number of lead service lines for service lines of unknown material.
 - What is the national ratio for projecting service lines, how was it calculated and how was it applied.¹
- How many utilities responded, by state, and how many of those responses provided information on the material of all service lines (i.e., complete responses).
- The confidence level in the data for the lead service line assessment. (EPA established a threshold of 90% for the main Needs Survey "to provide a high degree of confidence in the statistical precision of the assessments findings."²)
- The formula used by EPA to calculate the number of lead service lines.
- Complete calculations for every state for determining the number of lead service lines.
- Whether EPA considered capping the amount of funds allotted to an individual state, such as the cap used in the allotment formula for the Water Pollution Control Program (section 106).
- Statutory authority to develop a separate allotment formula for funding for lead service line replacements.
- Steps taken by EPA to improve data collection on lead service lines after the Infrastructure Investment and Job Act (IIJA) became law.
- When and how EPA informed states that the data on lead service lines would be used to allot funding.

Finally, while the SRFs appreciate the opportunity for states to update the data on service line materials, it is critically important that states understand the methodology before deciding whether to participate in the one-time update. Most importantly, SRFs want to have a level playing field with a clear set of rules moving forward.

Thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,



Jeff Walker
Executive Administrator
Texas Water Development Board

¹ "If a state reported all unknown materials or did not respond to the survey, for large and medium systems, a national ratio derived from the states for which EPA had data was applied." DWINSA Public Fact Sheet 04.04.2023

² EPA Fact Sheet: 7th Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment, April 2023

CC: Dr. Jennifer McLain, Director, EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water
Senator Tom Carper, Chair, Environment and Public Works Committee
Senator Shelley Moore Capito, Ranking Member, Environment and Public Works Committee
Senator Alex Padilla, Chair, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water and Wildlife
Senator Cynthia Lummis, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water and Wildlife
Congresswoman, Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Chair, Energy and Commerce Committee
Congressman Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Committee
Congressman Bill Johnson, Chair, Environment, Manufacturing and Critical Materials
Congressman Paul Tonko, Ranking Member, Environment, Manufacturing and Critical
Materials

About CIFA

CIFA is a national not-for-profit organization that represents the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs), the nation's premier programs for funding water infrastructure that protects public health and the environment.

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