



CUSTOMER STORY

Newark sets the standard for community engagement and education with their new LSLR program



“120Water serves as an extension of our staff to educate residents about the importance of the lead drinking water program, gain their cooperation, and ultimately create better public health.”

**-Tiffany Stewart,
Assistant Director**



The Challenge

The City of Newark, NJ initiated a Lead Service Line Replacement program in 2018 as part of its efforts to provide clean, safe, and reliable drinking water for all residents. One of the biggest challenges faced by the city is engaging residents as the project gets underway. With a large transient population of renters, it can be hard to get residents and landlords to fully engage in a drinking water program. Not only can a lack of understanding on the part of the public jeopardize their health, it also makes it difficult for Newark to collect information needed to validate their LSLR program.

The Project

The process of replacing the lines began in 2019. With an aggressive goal of replacing 16,000 LSLs within 24-30 months, the project is already making significant strides. Newark also has a key goal of educating the public on the project and the actions they can take to reduce their exposure to lead in drinking water. Newark’s efforts to be proactive in their communication to residents are an outstanding model of what an LSLR program should be. The primary goals of this proactive communication are: increased return rates for kits, increased awareness, and brand building.

The Tactics

Newark has partnered with 120Water to manage the resident communication and post-replacement kit process, with a goal of keeping residents engaged for 6 months after a line has been replaced, culminating in a 6-month post-replacement sample to validate that they’ve been successful in their efforts to get the lead out.

120Water is using a variety of communication tactics to help Newark achieve this goal, with a core focus on direct mail. The goal is for residents to be fully engaged and educated by the time the 6 month sample arrives at their doorstep.

At the 6 month mark, 120Water will handle sending the kits to residents with simple directions to fill the bottle and return in the mail, where results will be analyzed at a partner lab and loaded into the 120Water software. Officials at Newark will be able to track every step of the process to understand where kits have been sent, which have been returned, and what the results are showing.

What’s Next

Newark’s program is a strong example of engaging the public in water quality issues, and communicating proactively to educate and align goals with the customers being served. With the new LCR revisions mandating increased testing and the creation of LSL inventories, this type of model program can serve as a blueprint for other cities or water systems looking to stay compliant and run successful programs.