



Testimony
Elizabeth Gara, Executive Director
Connecticut Water Works Association
Before the Public Health Committee
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The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA), a trade association of municipal, regional and private water companies, appreciates the opportunity to comment in **support of Section 1 of HB-5489, AN ACT CONCERNING REPLACEMENT OF SERVICE LINES BY A WATER COMPANY AND WATER TESTING. This bill is very similar to a bill before the Energy & Technology Committee, HB-5345, which CWWA also supports.**

The tragic situation in Flint, Michigan and other cities in the United States have prompted serious discussions about the dangers of lead in drinking water, particularly for young children. Fortunately, Connecticut's water companies have long been subject to stringent state and federal laws that ensure that our drinking water meets high water quality standards. Lead is rarely found in the groundwater or surface water supply sources used by public water utilities in this part of the country.

Annual testing for lead at Connecticut water treatment plants has consistently shown that there are no detectable levels of lead entering the distribution system from water treatment facilities. In addition, water companies rely on comprehensive corrosion control programs to minimize the potential that lead will leach into our customers' drinking water from customers' service lines, plumbing or solder. Under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, water companies were required to conduct testing in residential properties and replace lead distribution piping to minimize risks associated with lead levels.

In addition to these efforts, Connecticut's water companies are actively engaged in efforts to implement and revise EPA's Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). EPA's Office of Water is increasing oversight of state programs to identify and address any deficiencies in the current implementation of the LCR, including determining whether states are: 1) Taking appropriate action to address lead action level exceedances, including optimizing corrosion control; 2) Providing effective public health communication and outreach to residents on steps to reduce exposures to lead; and 3) Removing lead service lines where required by the LCR.

Although water companies were required to replace lead service lines in compliance with amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act adopted in 1986, customers in homes built prior to 1986 may have lead service lines that they have not replaced. Customers are responsible for replacing and maintaining the service lines from the curb stop to the house.

Section 1 of HB-5489 provides a strong incentive for private water companies to develop a plan to assist customers in replacing lead service lines by ensuring that the water company can recover the cost of replacing such lines in its rates or other mechanism approved by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA).



By creating a mechanism for assisting customers in replacing lead service lines, this bill will position Connecticut as a leader in protecting its citizens from health concerns associated with lead in drinking water supplies.

Please note that we do not have a position on Section 2 of the bill.