MAKING WAVES

GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
L'ALLIANCE DES VILLES
DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

Cities Initiative, Nine U.S. Member Cities Partner with the White House to Get the Lead Out

On January 27, 2023, the Cities Initiative was proud to join Mayor Billy McKinney of Zion, Mayor Cavalier Johnson of Milwaukee, and other U.S. member mayors at the White House in order to attend the launch of the Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out Partnership. Vice President Kamala Harris; Michael Regan, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator; Radhika Fox, EPA Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water; and White House Infrastructure Coordinator Mitch Landrieu were among the senior U.S. officials who participated in this important event to recognize and galvanize progress on lead service line replacement nationwide.



Vice President Harris shares her and President Biden's vision for replacing all lead service lines within 10 years.

There are an estimated 6-10 million lead service lines remaining in the United States, a significant portion of which are concentrated in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The Biden-Harris Administration has set the ambitious goal of replacing them all within the next decade, as well as provided $15 billion for lead service line replacement over five years via the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

Building on these commitments, the Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out Partnership was created to enhance local and state collaboration, establish best practices, and accelerate action towards the shared vision of lead-free drinking water. The Cities Initiative and nine U.S. member cities – including Cleveland, Detroit, Evanston, Flint, Kenosha, Rochester, Sheboygan, Milwaukee, and Zion – are among the partnership's inaugural 100 participating entities. The Cities Initiative's press release regarding the partnership is available here and a recording of the full event is available here.



Mayor Johnson discusses Milwaukee's equity-driven prioritization plan for lead service line replacement program.

The Cities Initiative also endorsed the White House's Guiding Principles to Reduce Lead and Protect Families and Communities. These principles encourage the adoption of best practices for lead service line replacement, including prioritizing underserved communities, replacing the entire service line, and leveraging all available funding to expedite the replacement process.


Mayor Biss of Evanston, Mayor McKinney of Zion, and Travis Wheeler of the Cities Initiative at the White House event.

Additionally, to complement the actions taken by the White House, EPA on the same day announced the Lead Service Line Replacement Accelerators, a new initiative with four states – including Pennsylvania and Wisconsin – that will provide targeted technical assistance to help 40 underserved communities access IIJA funding for lead service line replacement.