

Good morning. In DIRPA Daily News today:

- Clinton, MI, is replacing aging cast iron waters installed in the 1930s with Ductile iron pipe.
- WI getting nearly \$139M for clean drinking water upgrades that will use "American iron and steel" in materials.
- The US EPA is making available more than \$6.5B Drinking Water State Revolving Fund for drinking water infrastructure upgrades, which can be used on treatment systems for PFAS chemicals and replacing lead pipes.

SUMMARY: Clinton, MI, is replacing aging cast iron waters installed in the 1930s with Ductile iron pipe.

Clinton replacing aging water main, service lines along U.S. 12

Daily Telegram

<https://www.lenconnect.com/story/news/local/2023/04/05/clinton-michigan-avenue-water-main-service-lines-project-in-process/70077519007/>

Clinton, MI, is replacing aging cast iron waters installed in the 1930s with Ductile iron pipe.

SUMMARY: WI getting nearly \$139M for clean drinking water upgrades that will use "American iron and steel" in materials.

\$139 million in federal funds going to Wisconsin to update drinking water infrastructure

News800

https://www.news8000.com/news/environment/139-million-in-federal-funds-going-to-wisconsin-to-update-drinking-water-infrastructure/article_a00e9daa-d42c-11ed-80bb-8318e504481c.html

US Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) issued a press release announcing nearly \$139 million for clean drinking water infrastructure upgrades that includes mention of the Buy America provision that "ensures American iron and steel are used for the infrastructure upgrades."

SUMMARY: The US EPA is making available more than \$6.5B Drinking Water State Revolving Fund for drinking water infrastructure upgrades, which can be used on treatment systems for PFAS chemicals and replacing lead pipes.

EPA pours billions into drinking water efforts

E&E News

(email distribution; full article below)

Drinking water needs across the country are set to receive a boost as the Biden administration pushes forward with ambitious infrastructure efforts, including a major push to remove lead from systems nationwide.

EPA announced Tuesday morning that the agency will make over \$6.5 billion available in funds for states, territories and tribes in need of drinking water infrastructure upgrades. That amount includes significant funding for a range of high-priority needs, like replacing lead water pipes and tackling contaminants like "forever chemicals."

Appearing in Rockford, Ill., alongside prominent congressional Democrats, EPA Administrator Michael Regan unveiled the funding while touring a residential construction site where lead service lines are being replaced.

"Every community deserves access to safe, clean drinking water," said Regan in a statement.

He touted the Biden administration's investment in water projects and said the new funding would support the president's "goal of removing 100 percent of lead pipes across our country and protect[ing] communities from PFAS pollution." Regan asserted that his agency will also continue to prioritize mitigating other threats to drinking water, from climate change to cybersecurity risks.

The money is being made available through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, or DWSRF. That program provides financial assistance to communities seeking to address drinking water needs and is among the key water-centric funding sources facilitated by EPA. It is also receiving a hefty boost from the bipartisan infrastructure law, which freed up an ocean of funds for various agency priorities, including \$50 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure improvements between 2022 and 2026.

EPA said Tuesday that \$6 billion of that total will be available to states through DWSRF in the law's second year of implementation. That funding includes \$3 billion for lead service line identification and improvement, along with \$800 million to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other drinking water contaminants. Another \$2.2 billion will go to other critical drinking water infrastructure needs, while \$500 million will be available through the DWSRF annual appropriations.

Allotments for states are based on the results of EPA's "7th Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment," which is mandated by the Safe Drinking Water Act. That survey is conducted every four years and helps determine where funding should be prioritized.

Illinois Sens. Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, both Democrats, applauded Regan's announcement in their state as key for ensuring both public health and equity.

"Every American — no matter their race, income or zip code — deserves to have confidence that the systems carrying and processing the water they use every day are safe, clean and reliable," said Duckworth in a statement.

Lead, PFAS fears dominate

The influx of funds underscores EPA's ongoing focus on drinking water contaminants, particularly lead, while also laying out a new approach for the agency.

In its most recent drinking water survey, the agency asked about lead issues for the first time.

EPA now projects a total of 9.2 million lead service lines nationally and is reworking how it distributes infrastructure law funding in order to prioritize areas with the most need.

That marks a victory for many parts of the country, along with environmental groups. Lead contamination has wrought havoc in cities like Flint, Mich., with devastating consequences, particularly for children. Other communities around the country are also struggling to replace their aging lead service lines but have increasingly turned to the federal government for help.

Groups like the Natural Resources Defense Council, however, have been critical in the past of EPA's published allotments for lead service line replacement, arguing that the agency left states with the most need receiving less funding. That includes states like New Jersey, Michigan and Illinois, where Regan made his remarks Tuesday morning.

But this round of funding reflects a new formula EPA is relying on to determine where need is greatest nationwide. Administration officials called the new method "better and fairer," asserting that the change will have environmental justice benefits and put the country on track to replacing 100 percent of lead service lines over the next decade.

Cyndi Roper, NRDC's Michigan senior policy advocate and the co-author of an analysis probing EPA's lead pipe funding, praised the new approach.

"EPA's changes will ensure a fairer and more equitable distribution of funding dollars to replace the nation's millions of lead pipes," Roper said. "It's good news for communities with the highest need that will now have access to more funding to get lead pipes out of the ground."

The influx of funding pegged to lead could also preview bigger actions to come. Experts have long said that funds from the infrastructure law alone will not be enough to replace all of the country's aging and hazardous lead pipes.

Ensuring removal would likely require more aggressive regulatory action, something the administration is still mulling. EPA is expected to move forward with a new lead and copper rule this fall, with regulatory proponents optimistic that the agency will seek a stronger and more protective regulation.

Beyond lead, regulators remain locked in as ever on the PFAS contamination crisis that has plagued water systems across the country.

EPA emphasized the notorious family of chemicals in touting the new drinking water funds Tuesday. The focus echoed similar sentiments from last week when regulators unveiled \$775 million in funding for water infrastructure through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. That federal-state partnership compliments DWSRF and assists communities as they tackle wastewater and stormwater needs.

Regan unveiled the CWSRF funding in North Carolina, where he previously ran the state's environmental department and dealt with a range of major issues, including an ongoing PFAS contamination crisis.

EPA's top official was also back at home in early March when the agency announced its landmark proposal seeking to regulate six PFAS compounds in drinking water, the most significant move the agency has made to date in cracking down on the sprawling chemical family.