

Attorney Generals Settlement with Pittsburgh Water Authority a Reminder of Lead Pipe Obligations

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The Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General entered into a settlement on July 16, 2020 with the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority ("PWSA") as part of its investigation into PWSA's negligence that exposed residents to high levels of lead when the water authority was forced to replace old lead water pipes throughout Pittsburgh. By failing to inform residents of the impact of the replacement program, PWSA prevented residents from knowing when and how to take simple steps that would have reduced their exposure to lead in their drinking water. Under the agreement, PWSA is required to donate \$500,000 to organizations that protect Pittsburgh residents from lead contamination in their drinking water. In addition, an independent corporate monitor will be appointed to provide reports to the Office of Attorney General, PWSA and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

The primary source of lead in drinking water is from corrosion of lead containing materials in service lines, fixtures and faucets. Approximately 40% of Pennsylvania's housing stock was built before 1950 and are likely to contain leaded plumbing materials. Public water suppliers, both public and private, are required by federal and state regulations to implement a number of measures to address lead in drinking water, including monitoring, pipe replacement, and public education and notification. Failure to comply with these requirements not only threatens public health but also subjects public water suppliers to potential civil and criminal sanctions. The Attorney General's settlement with PWSA is a reminder of this fact.

Public water suppliers with questions regarding their regulatory obligations can [contact me](#) or any member of the [Barley Snyder Environment & Energy Practice Group](#).

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