

Toward Tomorrow

CITY OF NORMAN
Spring 2022 Proposition



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Pipe Replacement

[View a video by clicking here](#)

Q: What is the condition of Norman's water lines?

A: Norman's water pipes are not in the best of shape at this time. We have 600 miles of pipe in Norman, and 300 miles of our lines are made of metal and our soils are clay in a lot of areas and are corrosive to metal pipes. So I kind of measure up that our system is not in the best of shape, because we experience so many line breaks.

—Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities

Q: What are the responsibilities of the Line Maintenance Division?

A: So, water line maintenance repairs roughly 150 to 300 water line breaks per year. With the water main breaks comes water outages for our residents, which include nursing homes, businesses, restaurants, schools, just to name a few. When those water line breaks occur, then we have to go out and notify all the residents as best we can and make the repairs, which costs money.

—Michael Price, Line Maintenance Supervisor

Q: What do pipe repairs entail?

A: It's not just the fix of the pipe. It's replacing the concrete, it's replacing the asphalt, it's tearing out somebody's driveway, it's multiple homes without water during this time, and construction. So having the funding to fix the pipes, put new pipes in, will reduce the cost to the community.

—Scott Aynes, Line Maintenance Manager

Q: Why is water distribution upkeep and maintenance so important?

A: So, delivering water to all of our businesses, our residents, is vital – to our hospitals, our fire protection. We need to be able to rely on the good water we make at the water plants – it has to be stored in the water tanks, and then it has to be there for all of us to use. So, if you have these pipe failures, that disrupts your ability to provide fire protection, good water and good service to your businesses and your residents. —

Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities

A, Cont'd: Everything, including our water pipes, have a lifespan. Right now, we have water pipes, and service lines meters that are, roughly, at least 50 years old in some parts of neighborhoods, and with that comes the line breaks, the problems, the leaks. With extra funding, I believe that we could focus more on these areas where we know the water pipes have aged and, you know, outlived their lifespan.

-Michael Price, Line Maintenance Supervisor

Q: What happens if the vote does not pass?

A: What that means to me is that we just continue on as we are, stretching the budget to the max every year, prioritizing which line is worse, which one needs the repairs.

-Michael Price, Line Maintenance Supervisor

Q: Why is pipe replacement better than pipe repair?

A: Recently, this last summer, we had over 20 line breaks from Robinson to Tecumseh, along the railroad tracks – same line, just continued. We would repair it in one spot, leave, and then a couple days later down the way it was leaking in another spot. Our crews – when you react to these kind of failures, pipe failures, that entails people need their water turned back on in a quick manner. So, we dig it up. We put a clamp around it, the hole, and then we cover it back up, and then usually have to repair concrete, sidewalk – damages that we weren't anticipating, and then we didn't replace any pipe; all we did is patch it. So these repairs just this last summer totaled over 30,000 dollars. And instead of patching pipe for thirty thousand dollars, if we get proactive and start replacing pipe on a proactive stance, we would be able to replace 150 to 170 feet of pipe with that thirty thousand dollars as opposed to just putting clamps on it and putting it back.

-Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities

Related Articles & Information:

- [Drinking Water Infrastructure in America, American Society of Civil Engineers](#)
- [The Economic Benefits of Investing in Water Infrastructure, American Society of Civil Engineers & Value of Water Campaign](#)
- [PVC Pipe Benefits & Survey, American Society of Plumbing Engineers](#)