

Water Emergencies and Main Breaks



When a pipe breaks the District works quickly, night or day, to protect public health, the environment, and to restore water service to customers. Here are some common questions and answers concerning water main breaks.

Q: What Causes Water Mains to Leak?

A: Age and changing weather conditions create a stress on our water infrastructure, increasing the chance of leaks and needed repairs. Sometimes water mains can be damaged by construction crews excavating near our facilities. The District appreciates the community's patience with any unavoidable disruptions caused by these repairs.

Q: What to do if you Suspect a Water Main Break?

A: The first thing you should do is call the District's **24-hour water emergency hotline at (916) 483-2452**. Once the District has been notified, an experienced employee or crew is dispatched to investigate and assess the situation.

Q: What Happens When the Crew Arrives?

A: When a crew arrives on site, they will evaluate the severity of the leak and determine if immediate repairs are needed. They will also determine if it is necessary to shut down the water main. In many cases, the main break itself may interrupt water service or reduce water pressure for customers.

The District will inform affected residents as soon as possible of any disruption of water service. Yet when there are unsafe conditions or property damage, an emergency shutdown may be necessary, giving crew members little opportunity to provide advance notice. Sometimes the presence of a crew in the area and low or fluctuating water pressure are the only initial notice that can be provided.

Main breaks that leave customers without water service are given highest priority. When a break is identified, the water is turned off to the immediate area and repairs begin. The interruption of water to customers is a decision that the District takes very seriously.



Q: How Long Will My Water Be Off?

A: Crews work quickly to repair main breaks and leaks; however, work can take several hours. Crews will work nonstop to repair leaks and restore water service; however, unforeseen challenges can arise causing the process to take longer, including:

- Old valves that do not operate properly
- Covered or buried valves
- Working around other utilities (gas, telephone, power or fiber optics)
- Difficulty finding the source of the leak
- Weather conditions
- Site and traffic conditions

Q: Why Can't My Water Be On During the Repair?

A: Repairing a leak on a water main is a challenging job. Crews must excavate deep in the ground through saturated soil in many types of weather. Having the water main on during repairs would make the operation lengthier and unsafe.



The District appreciates your patience and understanding during emergency repair situations.