

From: Alderman Russell Stamper, City of Milwaukee Common Council

Re: Water/Sewer Line Failures and Water Leaks in Milwaukee

November 29, 2023

Dear Public Works Committee Members:

Milwaukee Water Works customers can be caught off guard with expensive water and sewer line repairs, as well as costly water leaks. According to an email sent to me on June 26, 2023, from Kurt Sprangers, the Engineer in Charge in the Milwaukee Environmental Engineering Department, and a separate email sent to me on June 22, 2023, from Patrick Pauly, Milwaukee Water Works Superintendent, that included lateral water and sewer line failure information, the following estimates have been made:

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- Milwaukee Public Works receives around 900-1300 calls per year for residential sewer backups.
 - The average HomeServe sewer backup claim in Milwaukee is approximately \$1,000 per claim.
 - If the average per year is 1,100 calls to Public Works, at a price of \$1,000 per claim, the annual estimated cost to Milwaukee homeowners is **\$1.1M**
 - Milwaukee Public Works receives around 100 calls per year for more serious sewer line work (such as a complete homeowner sewer line replacement).
 - HomeServe's average sewer replacement claim in Milwaukee is around \$5,000 per claim.
 - The estimated annual cost to Milwaukee homeowners is **\$500K**
 - Milwaukee Public Works received 560 calls last year for residential water line replacements.
 - HomeServe's average water line replacement cost in Milwaukee is \$4,000
 - The estimated cost to Milwaukee homeowner's is **\$2.2M**
 - Milwaukee citizens do not always call Water Works when they experience water and sewer line breaks, so these numbers are representative of those who actually called the city to report an issue.
 - Milwaukee homeowners paid close to (or perhaps more than) **\$4M last year** (out of pocket and unexpectedly) on residential water and sewer line issues.

**Commercial water loss is not included in this number, but could be eliminated if MKE adopts the ServLine leak protection program.*