

PHASE 2: FIBER INSTALLATION



Dr. Angela C. Verdell
General Manager

Last year, Columbus Light & Water (CL&W) began the installation of a high-speed fiber-based grid network to improve reliability and communications to its substations, lift stations, and organization's buildings. The \$1.4 million fiber installation project was initially intended to introduce faster broadband internet service to business and residential customers especially aiding rural and underserved areas of the community. Due to state law prohibiting municipal broadband operations and networks, CL&W found another way to benefit customers with enhanced services by upgrading the connectivity network for its electrical systems control, switches, and wastewater system lift stations.

"We are pleased to announce that we are in phase two of the project and installing the fiber backbone using a 144-strand count fiber, which is the main ring around the city of Columbus with some laterals that will be used to feed Columbus Light & Water's infrastructure," said Dr. Angela Verdell, General Manager of Columbus Light & Water.

A key advantage of the fiber network is its ability to support two-way communication, allowing CL&W to receive real-time data from its various systems and respond accordingly.

"The overall benefit will be to the customer because the fiber project allows us to integrate into our SCADA system to enhance alarm monitoring, address faults, and respond to outages a lot faster," said Verdell. "I am proud of our Electric Department and team for their continued hard work with the fiber installation. Their dedication and expertise have been essential in making this project a reality."

FiberRise was contracted to build and install the fiber-based grid network (Phase 1). CL&W line crew are completing the fiber ring and routing laterals in Phase 2 of the installation.

"We saw an opportunity to improve the connectivity to our community," said Verdell. "By upgrading our 20-year old system with high-speed fiber optic, we are literally broadening our reach to our customers as well as delivering the best available technology for faster communication and reliability. Our goal is to be well-positioned for future phases of this project as it relates to economic development, expansions, connectivity, and service."

Phase 2 of the fiber line installation is expected to be completed by the Fall of this year.

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NEW EV: FAST CHARGING STATION

Another ChargePoint charging station in Columbus is located on Main Street near the Tennessee Williams Home & Welcome Center, which is a Level 2 station delivering 10 – 60 miles of range per hour of charging.

"It is important for us to always be on the leading edge of technology and infrastructure of charging stations to meet the demand as more electric vehicles continue to enter the market," said Rushing.



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SUMMER 2024 EDITION



CUSTOMER CONNECTION NEWS

The Power of People: News for customers of Columbus Light & Water



Photo: Columbus Light & Water's Ribbon Cutting for New EV Fast Charging Station

NEW EV: FAST CHARGING STATION

Shopping, eating, or just strolling along 5th Street South is so much more convenient now with the addition of two more EV charging stations in downtown Columbus. Columbus Light & Water (CL&W) held a grand opening on May 1 of a new electric vehicle (EV) fast charging station located in the parking lot of the Old Big Star building, across from CL&W's main office, and adjacent to its customer service drive through.

The new charging station was made possible thanks to grants and partnerships with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the Mississippi Department of Environment Quality (MDEQ). The funding from TVA covers 80% of the costs for the chargers, with MDEQ's grants covering 70% of the installation fees. The total fast-charging station project amounts to roughly \$197,000.

"We are excited about adding a fast-charging station for our local community to enjoy the benefits of clean, safe, and affordable energy," said Marc Rushing, CL&W's Electric Manager. "These are ChargePoint Level 3 DC Fast chargers capable of achieving a full battery recharge in 30 mins or less."

The latest charging station is associated with the regional Fast Charge Network and is set to span the principal travel

passageways across TVA's service area encompassing seven states. It is designed to supplement the extensive initiatives of the National Electric Highway Coalition, whose goal is to facilitate extended-distance EV travel by setting up rapid chargers along main highways and interstates across the country.

The benefits these EVs bring to the Tennessee Valley region are significant, including:

- Attracting high-quality jobs – \$17.2 billion in EV and battery manufacturing has helped create over 14,000 EV-related jobs in the past 10 years.
- Reducing carbon emissions from gasoline vehicles by almost 1 million metric tons per year or the equivalent of the carbon sequestered by 1 million acres of U.S. forests in one year.
- Reinvesting \$120 million in the local economy every year from electric refueling.
- Saving drivers up to \$1,000 in fuel and maintenance costs every year.



Marcus Rushing
Electric Division Manager

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EPA: LEAD AND COPPER INVENTORY



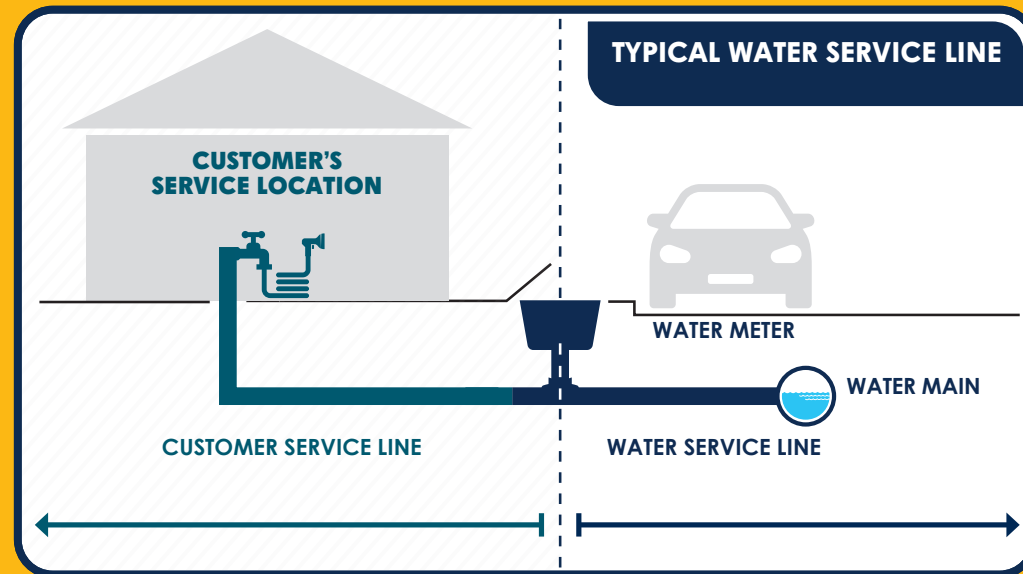
Ricky Dye
Water Division Manager

"We take clean water seriously at Columbus, Light and Water. We own the responsibility to provide safe and reliable utility services to our customers and work to ensure that the water we deliver meets all state and federal regulations. It is simply who we are."

Lead and copper inventory is an essential process conducted by Columbus Light & Water (CL&W) to ensure the safety and quality of the drinking water supply for residents. In response to the recent changes made by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), CL&W has taken proactive steps to conduct a comprehensive lead and copper inventory. This inventory will help identify any lead services in the water system and pave the way for their eventual replacement.

"Our priority is to safeguard the health and well-being of our community members by ensuring that the drinking water supply meets the highest safety standards," said Ricky Dye, Water Division Manager at CL&W. "We are committed to completing this inventory by the October 16th deadline."

CL&W crew members have completed 7500 inspections, roughly 70% and have records and has certified that no lead is present in its system.



"Our crew members are working diligently to accurately inspect and record roughly 11,500 water service lines in our city," said Dye. "We are recording the composition of the line as to whether it is non-lead, lead, or unknown. At present, we have not discovered any lead lines."

To determine the material of the water service line, crew members may perform the following:

- Use hand tools or other means to excavate the area in and around the water meter box.
- Perform scratch tests on the pipe to determine the pipe material.
- Document pipe material.
- Record pipe material at the water meter box.

"Once we have completed the inspections, we will submit our inventory report to the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)," said Dye. "If we find any lead lines in our system, we will work with MDEQ to develop a water service replacement plan to ensure we are protecting our community."

Water Quality

Data Table & Test Results

Calendar Year 2023

WHERE DO WE GET OUR WATER?

Our underground water is pumped from eight wells drawing from the massive sand of the lower Tuscaloosa Aquifer.

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

The source water assessment has been completed for our public water system to identify potential sources of contamination and determine the overall susceptibility of the drinking water supply. Susceptibility assessment has been completed and all wells have ranked moderate by the MDEQ for vulnerability to contamination.

CONTACT US

As a valued customer, we want you to be informed about your water utility. If you have any questions, please contact Customer Service with Columbus Light & Water at 662-328-7192, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

WATER QUALITY

All sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by substances that are naturally occurring or man-made. These substances can be microbes, inorganic or organic chemical and radioactive substances. All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

TESTING

The Columbus Light & Water Department routinely monitors for constituents in your drinking water according to Federal and Mississippi state laws. This table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2023. In cases where monitoring wasn't required in 2023, the table reflects the most recent results. As you can see by the table, our system had no violations. We're proud that your drinking water meets or exceeds all Federal and state requirements. We have learned through our monitoring and testing that some constituents have been detected, however

the EPA has determined that your water is safe at these levels.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR LEAD

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Columbus Light & Water is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>. The Mississippi State Department of Health Public Health Laboratory offers lead testing for \$10 per sample. Please contact 601-576-7582 if you wish to have your water tested.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FLUORIDATION

To comply with the "Regulation Governing Fluoridation of Community Water Supplies", COLUMBUS LIGHT & WATER is required to report certain results pertaining to fluoridation of our water system. The number of months in the previous calendar year in which average fluoride sample results were within the optimal range of 0.6 – 1.2 parts per million (ppm) was 10. The percentage of fluoride samples collected in the previous calendar year that was within the optimal range of 0.6 - 1.2 ppm was 100%. The number of months samples were collected and analyzed in the previous calendar year was 10.

Note: This system adds fluoride to your drinking water to help prevent and reduce cavities and improve overall oral health. Supply-chain issues have limited or prevented this water system's ability to obtain fluoride on a regular basis. The data presented above only reflects the months when this water system added fluoride to your drinking water.

EXPLANATION OF REASONS FOR MONITORING UNREGULATED CONTAMINANTS

Unregulated contaminants are those for which EPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminants monitoring is to assist EPA in determining the occurrence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate ways to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline: 1-800-426-4791.

CONTAMINATE	VIOLATION Y/N	DATE COLLECTE	LEVEL DETECTED	RANGE	MCL	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
DISINFECTION BYPRODUCTS						
Chlorine	N	2023	2.1 mg/L	1.00 - 3.30 mg/L	4.0 mg/L	Water additive used to control microbes
Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	N	2023	1.25 ppb	1.23 - 1.25 ppb	60 ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	N	2023	4.41ppb	2.71 - 4.41 ppb	80 ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
INORGANIC CHEMICALS						
Barium	N	2022	0.0138 ppm	0.0078 - 0.0138 ppm	2 ppm	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Lead	N	2021	1 ppm		15 ppm	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Sodium	N	2022	2.69 ppm	1.93 - 2.60 ppm	120 ppm	Naturally occurring runoff; erosion from natural deposits
RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINANTS						
Combined Radium	N	2019	2.32 pCi		5 pCi/L	Erosion from natural deposits
UNREGULATED CONTAMINANTS						
HAA6Br	N	2019	0.53 ppb	0 - 0.53 ppb	None	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
HAA9	N	2019	1.31 ppb	0.31 - 1.31 ppb	None	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Manganese	N	2019	0.57 ppb	0.42 - 0.57 ppb	None	Naturally occurring element

MCL = maximum containment level | ppm = parts per million
ppb = parts per billion | mg/L = milligrams per liter | RAA = Running Annual Average | pCi/L = picocuries per liter

