

WATER MAIN BREAKS

Water main breaks happen with no warning. The breaks are usually the result of shifting of the earth near the main or the deterioration of the main itself. The Public Works Department strives to make necessary repairs as quickly and safely as possible, with the least disruption to residents and traffic. The City appreciates the community's patience with any unavoidable disruptions caused by these repairs.



What To Do If You Suspect a Water Main Break.

Residents play a crucial role in reporting breaks. If you see bubbling water accumulating in the street or the parkway, the first thing you should do is call the City Clerk's Office at 708-424-7500. After normal business hours, weekends or holidays, please call the non-emergency Police line at 708-422-2188. Once the department has been notified, a crew is dispatched to investigate and assess the problem.

Repairing the Main.

If a water main break is confirmed, a utility locate request will be submitted to J.U.L.I.E. and a Public Works crew will be dispatched to the area to begin a repair. A J.U.L.I.E. locate is required for all utility companies (i.e. ComED, Nicor, etc) to mark the location of any underground structures. Work cannot begin until all potential underground hazards have been located by their respective firms. A J.U.L.I.E locate may take several hours depending upon the utilities involved. The scope of the main repair will vary depending upon the severity of the particular break, but the yard will be dug up to access the pipe. If the exposed leak is minor, it can sometimes be clamped and sealed without the need for shutdown of water. If the leak does require a water shutdown to repair, a community alert will be activated. (To sign up for an alert please go to Smart911 and register) Most shutdowns affect a limited number of residents and are isolated to a single street or block. Repairs generally take 2-4 hours to complete. There are isolated cases, however, when a complete shut off of the water main cannot be achieved. This happens when the closest shut-off valve to the break will not close. The crew then goes to the next valve up in the system, which in turn affects a larger number of people. Depending upon the location in town, this could be very minor and affect only a few additional houses or a greater number of houses.

Notifying Residents

- A [Smart 911](#) alert will be used
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- **When Water Service is Restored.**

During main break situations, residents in the affected and sometimes adjacent areas may experience sediment or discolored water during and following the repair of the break. The Village's water system is a "distributed network", meaning that the water main in the ground does not have a single directional flow to it. It is a spider web that distributes water when pressurized. If an area is shut down due to a break, the system will reestablish an equilibrium which may result in a change in direction of the water flow in pipes in some portions of town. This change in flow will cause sediment to appear in the water. Beyond an immediate geographic area, it is often impossible to tell where a flow change may occur.

The discoloration in the water is usually sand; possibly some rust, depending upon what the water main is made from, and other minerals that have precipitated out of the water. If you experience discoloration, the Village recommends that you run the cold water tap in the lowest location in your house until the water runs clear.