



MISSOURI  
AMERICAN WATER

WE KEEP LIFE FLOWING™

## WHEN MAIN BREAKS OCCUR, WE'RE ON IT!

Our crews work around the clock in all types of weather to make the needed repairs and restore service as quickly as possible.



### WHAT IS MISSOURI AMERICAN WATER DOING TO PREVENT MAIN BREAKS?

We have a water main replacement program where we continually analyze water main conditions such as age, changing fire flow requirements, water quality and maintenance history. In 2024 we invested about \$174 million to replace and upgrade aging water pipes. We expect this level of investment to continue for several years.

### WHAT CAUSES WATER MAINS TO BREAK?

Main breaks generally occur when there is movement in the ground, a big change in water temperature or pressure. While our pipes are installed below the frost line, freezing and thawing of soil creates movement and can induce additional stress on water mains. These stresses increase when temperatures drop. That is why “main break season” typically starts in October and continues through the winter.

### HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO REPAIR?

The time it takes depends on a number of factors:

- 1. Time it takes locating other underground utilities.** By law, we must call Missouri 811 to request professional locators to mark the pavement to prevent damage to other utilities.
- 2. How quickly we are able to locate the break.** Once the pavement is marked, we locate the leak or main break. Water can travel far underground before surfacing, so some breaks are more difficult to locate than others.
- 3. The nature of the leak.** Once the leak is uncovered, we can determine the appropriate fix. Sometimes we can make the repair with a clamp around the leak in the pipe; other times we must replace a valve or an entire section of pipe. And, if other utilities are in close proximity, it can complicate repairs and even require hand-digging. Generally, our crews are able to complete repairs in 8 to 12 hours.

### WILL MY WATER BE SHUT OFF?

Water in our pipes flows under pressure, but when possible, we will make the repair without shutting off the water. However, when the flow of pressurized water is too great, we need to temporarily reduce the pressure or shut off the water completely during the repair work. Customers may experience low pressure or no water during repairs.

### WILL MY WATER QUALITY BE AFFECTED?

Water quality is not always affected by main breaks or leaks. When water service is restored, you may notice air in your pipes and the water may be discolored. The discoloration isn't harmful, but can stain. If you experience discolored water, let the cold water run a few minutes to get rid of the air and color.

If we suspect there is a possibility that water quality has been impacted, we will issue a precautionary boil water notice. This notice will stay in effect until the water quality can be verified in the laboratory, at which time the precautionary boil water notice will be lifted.

### ABOUT ROAD & YARD RESTORATION

**If we had to excavate the road, yard, sidewalk or driveway:** We will provide a temporary surface restoration and, weather permitting, complete the permanent restoration work in approximately 90 days to allow time for the soil to settle. **Note: Permanent restoration work may be delayed during winter months (from mid-October through early April) depending on regulations related to paving. When this occurs, we will complete the restoration work when weather conditions and restoration practices can be permanently completed.**

### TRAVEL SAFELY!

Please use caution when our crews are in the road! They are working as safely and quickly as possible to make repairs.

