

What happens when you call about a water main break?

All reports of leaks and breaks are investigated as soon as possible. Main breaks may leave some customers without water service. These breaks are given highest priority for repair. A repair usually takes six to eight hours to complete after the water is turned off to an area. There are times when repairs must be prioritized. Public Works appreciates customers' patience as the work is completed as quickly as possible to restore water service.

When are main breaks or leaks most likely to occur?

Main breaks or leaks are most likely to occur during extreme weather conditions. Frigid weather is the most common time for main breaks, when both air and water temperatures can contribute to breaks. Hot, dry weather is the second most frequent time. Shifting ground and increased volume and pressure can stress water mains.

What happens after I call to report a water main break or leak?

Someone from the Public Works Water Division inspects the location of the suspected break / leak and determines the source of the water. Upon determining that there is a water break / leak in the city-owned piping, emergency utility locates are called in. For safety reasons, no digging can commence until all underground utilities have been identified and marked. It takes up to two hours for emergency locates to be completed. During that time a Public Works repair crew is assembled and dispatched to the work site to begin notifying affected residences that the water will be shut off. Once residents have been notified and utilities located, the water main is excavated and repaired. Final restoration of the work site usually takes between two to four weeks from the time the work has been completed. Site restoration is dependent upon the type of restoration required and scheduling work with the other divisions. Winter excavations are usually completed during April and May. Restorations are dependent upon the availability of materials to finish the repairs (e.g., hot asphalt).