

# Water Service Line Warranty Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is this program?**

A: Missoula's water customers own the water service line from the main out in the street into their home. This was also the case under Mountain Water Company ownership. The cost of repairing and replacing these service lines can be a significant financial burden to many homeowners. The City of Missoula recognized a need to provide its customers with options for avoiding costly unanticipated water system repairs. We became aware that the National League of Cities and the Montana League of Cities and Towns had endorsed Service Line Warranties of America (SLWA) to offer water service line protection plans. After thorough review, the City of Missoula chose SLWA to offer warranty coverage to our water service customers and allowed the use of the City logo on their marketing materials.

**Q: How does the plan work?**

A: The plans work like insurance policies, with customers paying monthly premiums for the coverage (initially \$6.25/month for exterior water service line coverage). The warranty will cover the costs of repairs or replacement necessary when a leak occurs on a customer's service line, up to \$8,500 per claim with no deductible. The customer should be aware that repairs will only be made when a leak occurs. A leak is defined as water discharging on the ground, water pressure less than 30 pounds per square inch (psi), or excessive noise on a service line.

**Q: Is this program optional?**

A: Yes, the customer is under no obligation to participate in this program.

**Q: Why is the City partnering with an out-of-state firm?**

A: Offering this type of warranty coverage is a complicated process. It requires having infrastructure in place to process calls and to mobilize contractors 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. SLWA is offering this type of coverage in hundreds of cities, so they can keep costs as low as possible for the customer. Also, the City of Missoula published a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the *Missoulian* to give local firms an opportunity to provide this type of coverage. No firms responded to the RFP.

**Q: Is the City financially involved in this program?**

A: No, the City has no financial involvement. Many cities offering this coverage receive a portion of the premiums collected by SLWA. The City of Missoula elected instead to have SLWA reduce the premiums paid by the customer. Also, the premiums are collected by SLWA, not the City.

**Q: Did the City give SLWA my address or account information?**

A: No, the City did not provide any customer information to SLWA. They developed their own mailing list using publicly available information.

**Q: Can I pick my own contractor?**

A: No. If SLWA determines that a claim is eligible for coverage, they will dispatch a contractor of their choosing. They have already selected a network of local contractors who can perform the work.

**Q: Who do I call for questions about the program or to sign up?**

A: Call Service Line Warranties of America at 1-844-257-8795 or visit their website at <https://www.slwofa.com/>.

**Q: What other options are available?**

A: The City of Missoula has a low interest loan program available for customers who need to make costly repairs on their water lines. For more information about that program, visit the Missoula Water website <https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/water>, and click on "Information" under the "Water Line Loan Program" heading.