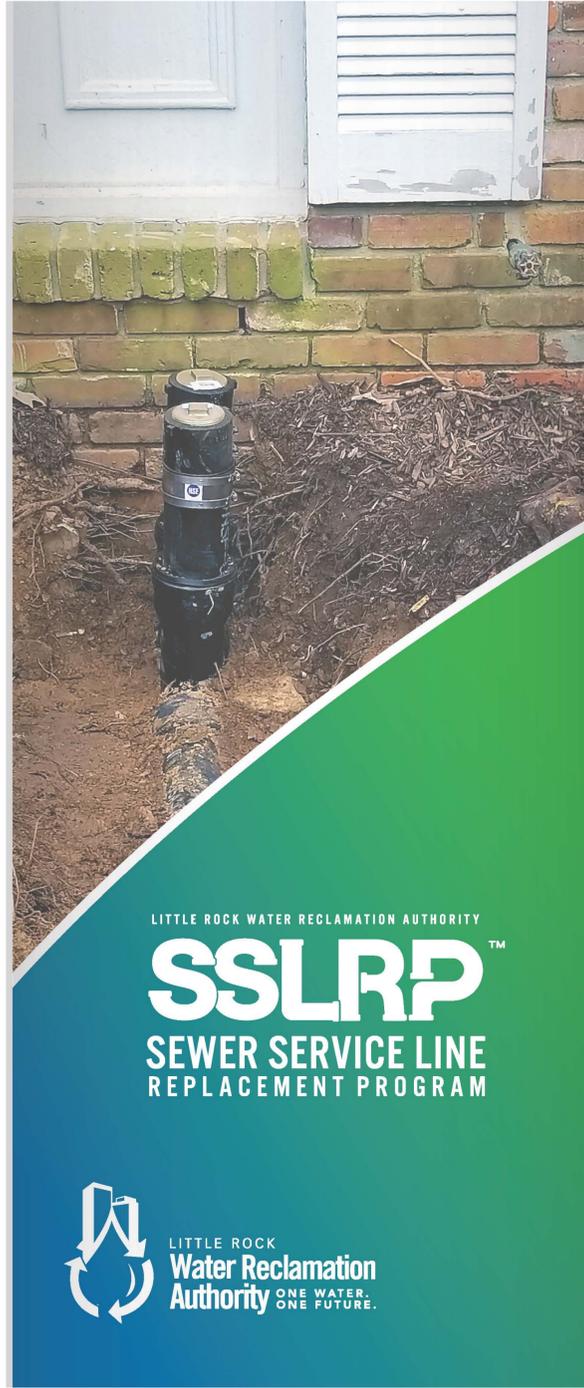


Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority Sewer Service Line Replacement Program

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Member Spotlight: Little Rock's Community-Powered Sewer Upgrade

In Little Rock, a groundbreaking initiative is transforming how cities tackle aging sewer infrastructure—and it's powered by the community itself. The Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority (LRWRA) over a decade ago launched the Sewer Service Line Replacement Program, a first-of-its-kind effort that helps homeowners replace failing private sewer lines while protecting public health and the environment.

Across the country, cities struggle with inflow and infiltration (I&I)—excess water entering sewer systems through cracks and leaks. In Little Rock, up to 44% of I&I comes from private service lines, which connect homes to the public sewer system. These lines often go unnoticed until they fail, leaking raw sewage into the ground and overloading treatment plants.

Rather than placing the full financial burden on homeowners, LRWRA took a different approach. Through a \$1 monthly charge on single-family residential sewer bills, the program creates a dedicated fund that reimburses qualifying homeowners up to \$2,500 for full replacement of their private service lines. This voluntary, community-based model has earned praise from city leaders and residents alike.

Since its launch in 2012, the program has reimbursed over 4,200 households and returned more than \$10 million to the community. The environmental benefits are significant: reduced sewer overflows, improved groundwater quality, and lower volumes of wastewater sent to treatment plants. Economically, it saves homeowners thousands in repair costs and helps the utility avoid costly infrastructure expansions.

What sets this program apart is its sustainability and replicability. Every dollar collected goes directly back to residents, and the program's policies and procedures are publicly available for other cities to adopt. LRWRA's model fosters trust, transparency, and shared responsibility—turning a complex infrastructure challenge into a community success story.

For many homeowners, the impact is personal. Some report finally being able to flush paper waste after years of backups. Others say the program relieved a financial burden they couldn't tackle alone. By addressing a hidden but critical part of the sewer system, LRWRA is proving that smart, innovative solutions can deliver lasting environmental and public health benefits.