

**2025 RATE CHANGES:** Lehigh County Authority's 2025 proposed water and sewer rates have been published on our website for review and public comment. View rate information at [lehighcountyauthority.org/2025-rates](http://lehighcountyauthority.org/2025-rates).

Did you know that LCA is a nonprofit organization, and 100% of your bill is used to support the operation and maintenance of the Allentown water and sewer system? This includes paying for major system upgrades and replacement of aging pipes, pumps, and treatment equipment – all very important upgrades to protect public health and the environment and provide reliable service to our customers!

## Understanding Water Meters

If you have access to the water meter in your property, usually located in the basement or a crawl space, you can read it any time. It's a great way to check for potential leaks in your home or business.

Water meters have displays that show when water is passing through the meter. If no water is in use, water should not be going through the meter. Some meter styles have a low-flow indicator that advances to show the smallest amount of water being used.



A great time to read a meter reading is at night when everyone goes to bed. While everyone in your home is asleep, little to no water should be used. Take another reading first thing in the morning before using water. If the reading shows a quantity of water being used, beyond maybe a toilet flush or two during the night, it's time to check for leaks.

LCA has a new webpage to help customers learn about water meters and a video tutorial showing how to take a meter reading. Some meters require a bright flashlight to activate them. We show you how at <https://www.lehighcountyauthority.org/watermeters/>. The page also explains how LCA reads your meter for billing purposes.

Don't forget now is the time to protect your pipes and water meter from the cold. We have tips for that, too! Find them on the bottom of the webpage.

We hope the new webpage is helpful! If you have questions about your specific water meter, give us a call.

## Protect Your Home from Water Damage and Sewer Backups



Water damage from flooding and sewer backups in the home can be a major inconvenience and expensive to clean up. There is also the possibility of losing personal property that cannot be cleaned or replaced. The good news is LCA has some tips to help you protect your home's plumbing and prevent problems.



**Protect Your Pipes:** Take care of the plumbing in your home to prevent problems and avoid water and sewer backups.

- Occasionally inspect water pipes for signs of leaks. Look closely at joints and valves.
- Insulate pipes exposed to cold weather to keep them from freezing. Don't forget to protect your water meter.
- Only flush human waste and toilet paper. Heavier paper, hygiene products, and wipes of all types can cause blockages. They do not biodegrade fast enough. Wipes of all types are fine to use but keep them out of your pipes.
- Clear out clogs at the first sign of a problem and stop them from getting worse. A small clog can quickly turn into a much bigger problem.
- Keep fats, oils, and grease (F.O.G.) from cooking out of drains. Instead, cool F.O.G. in a used soup can or carton, then throw it in the trash.
- Avoid planting trees or shrubbery near underground pipes. Roots are powerful and can intrude into pipes and cause damage and leaks.

### When Backups Happen

First, take photographs to document the situation. If there is a sewer backup in your home, do not flush toilets or run water, the dishwasher, or washing machine until the problem is resolved. If you do, it could mean a bigger mess!



If there is damage to your property, contact your insurance company to begin the claims process. Manage the degree of damage by cleaning up and drying out as much as possible or contact a professional restoration company that specializes in water and sewer clean up.

### What is LCA's Role?

If you are concerned about a water or sewer system issue, call LCA right away. Sometimes we can help before damage from flooding or a sewer backup occurs. Our experienced crews can inspect system pipes to help find out where the problem is – if it's on the customer's side or LCA's side. And sometimes we can repair a problem on our side or use high-pressure flushing to clear a sewer blockage before it becomes a problem. **Note: If we're called out and find the issue is on the customer's side, a service fee of \$50 is charged during LCA business hours and \$150 after hours.**

### Review Insurance Coverage

Check in with your homeowner's insurance company to review coverage. Most standard policies do not cover water and sewer backups, but many offer endorsements you can add.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** LCA is protected under Pennsylvania law by "governmental immunity." This means that in most cases, LCA is protected from customer property damage claims for most "normal" water and sewer backups.

Contact a licensed plumber for additional guidance on maintenance for your property's plumbing.  
**Caring for your home's plumbing and proper insurance protection are key!**



## Service responsibilities explained

A common question customers have is what they are responsible for when there is an issue with the water or sewer line. This diagram explains what LCA is financially responsible for and what you, the customer, are responsible for.

- 1 For your water service, there is a service line that goes from the water line in the street into the house. There is valve in the curb line, called curb box, and that is where the valve is located to turn the water on or off in your house.
- 2 LCA's responsibility is from the water main in the street up to that curb box.
- 3 The customer's responsibility is from the curb box into the house.
- 4 The only thing inside the house that LCA is responsible for is the water meter. You are responsible for protecting it from freezing or other damage.
- 5 On the sewer side, a service line connects your home plumbing to the main sewer line in the street. In many cases, your sewer service is managed by the township you live in, not LCA. However, LCA does provide direct sewer service in some areas, such as in Upper Milford, Weisenberg, Lowhill, Washington and Heidelberg townships, and some portions of North Whitehall Township. In most cases, customers are responsible for the sewer service line from the right-of-way line (curb line) into the house.

If you have a problem with your water or sewer line, LCA will come out and investigate the issue. If the problem is LCA's responsibility, there is no cost to the customer. If the issue is the customer's responsibility, you will incur a site visit fee, plus the actual cost of repair to fix the problem. Customer service contact information is listed on the magnet included in this mailer.

