



Governor issues Executive Order requiring public water supply reconnections & establishes fund for communities to comply

Governor Whitmer issued [Executive Order 2020-28](#) March 28 requiring the reconnection of public water supply services to residences that have had water service shut off. The order requires public water suppliers to immediately identify residences in their service area that do not currently have water service and to make best efforts to restore service to homes where the service has been disconnected due to non-payment or damaged infrastructure. The **order also includes reporting and accountability requirements.**

The order is effective for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency. It does not absolve anyone from responsibility for past-due bills prior to reconnection.

To assist communities in complying with the order, a \$2 million fund has been established through Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). The **Water Restart Grant Program** will provide funding to local communities to help reconnect homes to their water supplies.

EGLE will provide limited grants to communities based on available funds with **priority given to high-risk areas**. While MTA has not received the final response as to how priority will be determined for high-risk areas, it is believed the grants will be focused on areas that include both epicenters for the virus and historically financially distressed communities.

Requirements for the grants will include the following:

- Communities must provide a preliminary spending plan, including the estimated number of homes to be reconnected and estimated average cost per home, prior to the grant being initiated.
- If lead lines are being replaced as part of the reconnection, the entire line must be replaced.
- EGLE will reimburse up to \$5,000 for reconnection, line replacement, and restoration per home. Exceptions to the cap can be requested for homes needing more extensive work. Exceptions must be authorized by EGLE.

- The community must assure that the plumbers conduct appropriate flushing and provide communication to residents on the importance of flushing and use of filters if needed.
- A 25 percent local match is required.
- Grant funds will be provided on a reimbursement basis upon receipt of appropriate supporting documentation.

Any community interested in applying for grant funding must email the department at EGLE-RestartGrants@michigan.gov.

Additionally, the department is reminding those reconnecting to municipal water must first thoroughly flush stagnant water pipes and clean filter screens to remove accumulations of lead and other bacteria that can accumulate in stagnant water. Step-by-step instructions on how to do so are available through [this instructional video](#).

MTA will continue to provide additional information as it becomes available in our communications and on MTA's [COVID-19 webpage](#).