



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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**91-YEAR OLD WATER MAIN BURSTS ON CHICAGO'S SOUTHSIDE DEMONSTRATING THE NEED
TO INVEST IN THE CITY'S WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

Streets and Alleys Closed, Basements Flooded Near 47th and Loomis

A 91-year old water main near W. 47th Street and S. Loomis Boulevard in Chicago's Back of the Yard neighborhood burst early Saturday morning, closing streets and alleys and flooding nearby basements.

"We need to invest in our infrastructure to maintain the quality of life for people across the city, protect our homes from flooding and our cars from sinkholes," said Mayor Emanuel. "If we don't invest and proactively make upgrades to our system, we will continually be forced to react and make emergency repairs at a greater cost to everyone."

Earlier today, Mayor Emanuel visited the site of the broken water main at W. 47th Street and S. Loomis Boulevard and spoke with repair crews about working as quickly as possible to lessen the impact on residents and businesses.

"We need to invest in our aging infrastructure to ensure we can safely and efficiently deliver water to our 5.3 million customers in the region," said Commissioner Powers during his visit to the broken water main site. "The water main here at 47th and Loomis is close to 100 years old, and was obviously a break waiting to happen. This underscores the urgency of renewing our infrastructure. The cost of waiting is being paid today by closed businesses and flooded neighbors."

Yesterday, Commissioner Powers and Mayor Emanuel visited Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood where crews worked to repair a 125 year old water main.

The Emanuel Administration is proposing to replace 900 miles of century-old water pipes and reline or replace 750 miles of century-old sewer lines during the next decade. The City currently replaces 32 miles of water mains and 11 miles of sewer mains each year; this plan will more than double that, installing approximately 88 miles of new water mains and 25 miles of sewer mains a year.

This repair schedule will also create 18,000 jobs over 10 years.

Chicago has some of the oldest water infrastructure in the country, much of which was built between 1890 and 1930. DWM estimates that approximately 25 percent of water mains and more



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than 41 percent of sewer mains are more than 100 years old.

As a result, the city spends more than \$8 million in repairs for broken mains each year, similar to the emergency repairs now taking place at 47th and Loomis. DWM has at least a dozen workers and heavy equipment on site as starts to make repairs.

In addition to replacements and repairs, the proposed increase in rates will allow DWM to undertake necessary improvements, including:

- Increasing its efforts to line sewers from 40 miles to 49 miles a year. Lining sewers extends their life up to 50 years, at a quarter of the cost and none of the inconvenience of full excavation and replacement.
- Lining 14,000 catch basins and structures annually for the next 10 years. This extends their lives and prevents the structural collapse seen in recent years on the sides of streets.
- Repaving an average of 113 miles of streets each year after these projects are completed.

Finally, the new rates will allow DWM to convert four of its 12 pumping stations from steam power to electricity, providing an annual savings of \$7.5 million in maintenance, personnel and energy costs.

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