

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: October 13, 2026

To: Village President and Board of Trustees

Through: Napoleon Haney, Village Manager

From: Terence Acquah, Assistant Village Manager

Topic: Lead Service Line Inventory Verification – Hydro-Excavation Services

PURPOSE

Staff requests that the Village Board waive competitive bidding due to the time-sensitive and emergency nature of implementing the Village's 2026 Lead Service Line Replacement (LSLR) Program, approve a budget amendment for the amount of \$102,480, and approve Calumet City Plumbing, of Calumet City, IL to perform hydro-excavation services at approximately 244 locations at a cost of \$420 per location, for a total amount not to exceed \$102,480.

The hydro-excavation work is necessary to definitively verify water service line materials and identify properties eligible for replacement under the Village's 2026 LSLR Program.

PROCESS

The Village had anticipated replacing approximately 267 service lines during the 2026 construction year. However, an unexpected issue with the accuracy of the Village's existing service line inventory has created the need for additional field verification before replacements can proceed.

After the Village's selected LSLR contractor, Five Star Energy Services of Waukesha, Wisconsin mobilized for the project, they began conducting pre-construction inspections at homes identified in the Village's inventory as having lead service lines. During these inspections, Five Star repeatedly encountered copper service lines rather than lead. Copper is currently an acceptable service line material under Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) requirements and therefore does not require replacement through the Village's lead service line replacement program.

After Five Star completed its initial review of more than 50 homes scheduled for replacement, only nine properties were confirmed as having lead service lines. This raised immediate concerns regarding the accuracy of the Village's inventory and the Village's ability to identify enough eligible properties to keep the 2026 replacement project moving forward.

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



Much of the existing inventory was developed through a large-scale identification initiative conducted by the Public Works Department in 2023 and 2024. Residents were asked to identify and report the material of their water service line inside their homes. Village staff provided information and guidance to assist residents in distinguishing between lead, copper, and other materials. Based on the results of the recent field inspections, it could be rationally assumed that a significant number of service lines were incorrectly identified as lead.

Initially, Five Star conducted interior home inspections to verify service line materials. However, the Village would incur roughly \$150 per inspection per property, regardless of whether lead was ultimately identified. To reduce unnecessary costs, staff pivoted and began conducting the interior inspections using Village code enforcement personnel.

This approach also presented challenges. Staff experienced difficulty obtaining access to some residences, and when access was provided, Village personnel continued to encounter copper service lines at properties previously identified as lead. Given the number of properties requiring verification, staff determined that sending Village personnel into every residence would be inefficient and unsustainable and could further delay the 2026 replacement program.

Initial hydro-excavation work

To address these challenges, the Village initially authorized Calumet City Plumbing to hydro-excavate 59 locations at a cost of \$420 per location for a total of \$24,780. Rather than limiting this initial verification work only to properties previously identified as having lead service lines, staff used the opportunity to take a more comprehensive approach within the 2026 project area.

Staff directed the initial hydro-excavation work toward verifying service line materials at properties throughout the project area, including properties that had not previously been identified as lead. The purpose of this approach was to develop a more accurate understanding of the service line materials throughout the project area and ensure that the Village identifies and replaces as many lead service lines as possible while construction crews are already mobilized in the area.

This approach yielded positive results. Through the initial hydro-excavation work, staff was able to identify a significant number of lead service lines that were not accurately reflected in the Village's existing inventory. The results demonstrated that hydro excavation is an effective method for verifying service line materials and, importantly, identifying additional lead services that may otherwise have gone undetected.

Hydro-excavation process

For each property, Calumet City Plumbing provided a hydro-excavation truck and operator and excavated both sides of the buffalo box, commonly referred to as the B-box. Excavation began

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



approximately two feet from the B-box and proceeded away from the box toward both the street and the residence to minimize the potential for disturbing the B-box.

Exposing the service line on both sides of the B-box allowed the Village to identify the material of both the Village-owned and privately owned portions of the service. Calumet City Plumbing documented the findings on each side of the B-box and provided the results to the Village electronically in spreadsheet format.

The Village had the water services located and B-boxes marked prior to the start of work. Public Works provided one employee to assist with work-zone safety, traffic control, resident communication, and coordination. The Village also provided any necessary excavation protection and/or backfill, a location for the disposal of spoils, and access to water. Hydro excavation was limited to greenscape/softscape areas.



Contractor pricing and procurement

Although staff is requesting that the Village Board waive formal competitive bidding because of the immediate need to keep the 2026 LSLR Program moving forward, staff sought competitive pricing before recommending a contractor.

The Village obtained verbal quotes from:

- Calumet City Plumbing (\$420 per property)
- Airy's Construction (\$650 per property)

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



- Central Rodding Services (\$550 per property)
- Five Star Energy Services (\$600 per property)

Based on the pricing received and the Village's operational needs, staff recommends Calumet City Plumbing at \$420 per location to hydro excavate approximately 244 locations, for a total amount not to exceed \$102,480.

The requested waiver of competitive bidding is intended to address the immediate and time-sensitive needs of the 2026 project. Delaying verification to complete a formal solicitation could further affect the Village's ability to identify eligible lead service lines and complete replacements during the current construction program.

For the 2027 LSLR Program, Village Hall staff intends to conduct a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) or other appropriate competitive procurement process for hydro excavation and service line verification work. Depending on the Village's ongoing verification needs, staff may conduct a competitive solicitation annually to ensure the Village continues to receive competitive pricing for these services.

Potential Inventory Funding

Staff has confirmed with the IEPA that inventory verification through hydro excavation is not eligible for reimbursement through the Village's existing Lead Service Line Replacement loan funding. As a result, the Village will initially be responsible for these costs.

Staff is actively pursuing potential grant opportunities and other outside funding that could offset some or all of the cost of these verification services going forward. The Village was previously ineligible for the IEPA Lead Service Line Inventory grant program because our median household income (MHI) exceeded the program's limit. However, the next Notice of Funding Opportunity *may* remove the MHI limit, which would make Homewood eligible. Staff expects to know more in early 2027.

OUTCOME

Although the need for additional verification represents an unexpected challenge for the 2026 LSLR Program, establishing an accurate service line inventory is critical to the success of both the current project and future replacement years. Hydro excavation will allow the Village to more efficiently identify properties that actually contain lead, reduce unnecessary contractor inspection and mobilization costs, minimize the need to enter private residences, and establish a more reliable inventory for future construction planning.

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



FINANCIAL IMPACT

- **Funding Source:** Water & Sewer Fund - Operating
- **Budgeted Amount:** \$488,400 (funding for engineering consultant for LSLR reimbursable through IEPA Lead Service Line Loan program)
- **Budget Amendment Requested:** \$102,480
- **Cost not to exceed:** \$102,480

LEGAL REVIEW

Not Required

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

Waive competitive bidding due to the time-sensitive and emergency nature of initiating the Village's 2026 Lead Service Line Replacement (LSLR) Program; approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$102,480; and, approve Calumet City Plumbing of Calumet City, IL to perform hydro-excavation services at approximately 244 locations at a cost of \$420 per location, for a total amount not to exceed \$102,480.

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Calumet City Plumbing Proposal
- Lead Service Line Replacement Map