

# **PACE**

## **WATER SYSTEM**

### **Understanding Ownership of Water Mains and Service Lines**

Because the rules can vary significantly by municipality or water provider, it's essential for customers to understand where their responsibility begins for their water service lines. When a leak or

break occurs in a water pipe, many property owners are uncertain about who is responsible for repairs. To clear up confusion, it's important to distinguish between water mains and water service lines and understand the point at which ownership – and therefore responsibility – shifts from Pace Water System (PWS) to our member.

#### **Water Mains: Utility-Owned Infrastructure**

Water mains are the large pipes that form the backbone of the PWS water distribution system. These pipes, typically buried beneath streets or public rights-of-way, carry water from our wells and storage facilities to neighborhoods and commercial areas. Water mains are owned and maintained by PWS.

Responsibilities of PWS include:

- Installing new mains during infrastructure expansion.
- Performing routine maintenance and inspections.
- Responding to main breaks or emergencies.
- Replacing aging or deteriorating infrastructure.

Because water mains are part of the public infrastructure, adjacent property owners are not financially responsible for issues or repairs related to them.

#### **Water Service Lines: Shared Responsibility**

A water service line is the smaller pipe that connects an individual building to a PWS water main. This pipe typically runs from the water main under the street, through a public easement or right-of-way, and to private property, terminating at a water meter or entry point.

Ownership and maintenance responsibilities for service lines are generally divided as follows:

- From the water main to the property line and including the meter:

This portion is owned and maintained by PWS.

- From the property line/meter to the building:

This section is owned and maintained by the property owner.

#### **Implications for Property Owners**

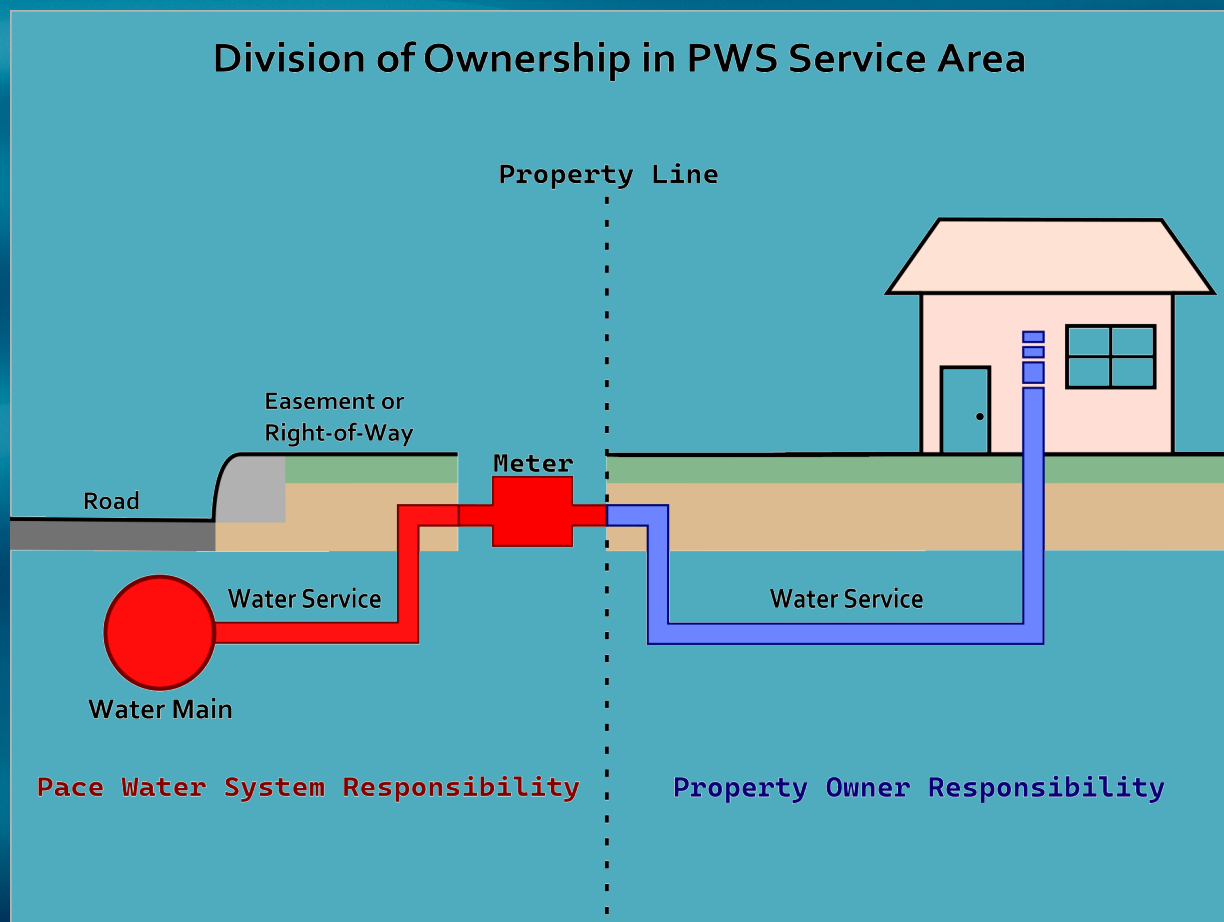
Leaks or breaks in a service line can result in high water bills, property damage, or even the need for emergency repairs. If the damaged portion falls within the property owner's responsibility, they are responsible for:



- Hiring a licensed plumber or contractor.
- Covering all repair or replacement costs.
- Ensuring compliance with local codes and permits.
- Paying for the cost of all water delivered through the meter.

### Visual Aid: The Ownership Divide

Here is a simplified overview of how ownership is divided within the PWS service area:



Clear knowledge of the boundary between PWS ownership and property owner/member ownership helps our members prepare for maintenance issues and avoid costly surprises. Damage occurring to PWS infrastructure is our responsibility to repair, and damage occurring to the property owner's service lines is the member's responsibility to repair.

As always, please contact us at [customerservice@pacewater.org](mailto:customerservice@pacewater.org) with any questions.