

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Allowing Municipalities to Enter Properties to Perform Lead Service Line Replacements

01/9/2020

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed legislation that will explicitly allow municipalities to adopt an ordinance to enter properties to perform lead service line replacements, after providing notice to residents. The bill aims to allow for an expedited and timely lead service line replacement process across New Jersey.

“As municipalities around our state replace lead service lines, we must ensure that they have timely access to properties,” **said Governor Murphy**. “This law equips cities and towns with a crucial tool in combatting the nationwide issue of lead in water.”

“The public health threat from aging water infrastructure is a statewide challenge,” said **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe**. “Giving municipal water systems the ability to swiftly replace lead service lines by providing property access is one of the many actions that will help protect public health by reducing the risk of lead exposure in New Jersey.”

“The legislation Governor Murphy signed today on lead service lines is a major step forward in removing these health hazards from all of New Jersey’s municipalities,” **said Newark Mayor Ras Baraka**. “We are pleased that Newark’s partnership with Essex County and the state is removing this risk to our city and residents. Thank you to all of the sponsors of this critical legislation which will ultimately create a safer New Jersey. We hope that this sparks a national policy movement on how all communities should address lead service lines.”

“Our city is taking the lead in addressing our lead service line issue through our ground-breaking ordinance,” **said Kareem Adeem, Acting Water and Sewer Utilities Director for the City of Newark**. “This ordinance has now become an example for our State Legislators and Governor Murphy. Municipal water and sewer utilities agencies across the state can now benefit from Newark’s experience and this statewide legislation to remove lead service lines in their communities. The strong unity and partnership created last year by Newark, Essex County, and New Jersey to replace our city’s 18,000 lead service lines that began in September has enabled us to replace more than 4,000 such pipes. Our combined achievement is therefore becoming a model for our entire state.”

“Throughout the water crises affecting Newark, the only agreed upon measure to completely address the problem was to replace the lead service lines,” **said Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.** “I am happy that Essex County was able to partner with Mayor Baraka to provide the funding to expedite the work without cost to property owners. Providing municipalities with the authority to enter private property

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supports initiatives by Newark and communities throughout the state to ensure all residents have access to a safe supply of water. I want to thank Governor Murphy and Senator Teresa Ruiz for understanding this important issue and making sure the legislation was passed."

"This law is crucial for the health and well-being of Essex County residents," **said Essex County Freeholder Board President Brendan Gill**. "It will allow municipalities such as Newark, Bloomfield, Belleville and Nutley, to further expedite the replacement of all lead service lines. I thank Governor Murphy for his leadership on this issue."

The legislation signed today permits that a municipality may adopt an ordinance that allows the municipality, or municipal water system, or any agent thereof, to enter a residential property to perform a lead service line replacement, provided that the municipality provides the residents of the property with notice at least 72 hours before entering the property, unless in the case of an emergency as determined by the Department of Environmental Protection. A municipality may not enter into a part of the property that is not directly related to performing a lead service line replacement.

Sponsors of the legislation include Senators Teresa M. Ruiz and Nellie Pou, and Assemblymembers Eliana Pintor Marin, Shanique Speight, and Gary S. Schaer.

"The cost of upgrading our water infrastructure falls disproportionately on older American cities, and it's critical that we create a permanent solution to eliminate the risk of lead in our water for all families. This bill will help municipalities achieve that, even when they are unable to reach property owners. It will give them the authority to pass ordinances permitting entrance into properties without consent in order to replace lead lines," **said Senator Ruiz**. "Especially in communities with large renter populations, this will ensure towns can take action to protect families and individuals living in homes with unresponsive landlords."

"This is about keeping people safe," **said Senator Pou**. "Lead consumption is terribly dangerous, particularly for children, and this legislation is going to be able to give municipalities the ability to confront this crisis head on in some of the poorest and most underserved communities in our state. This is an issue that will need to be tackled on multiple fronts and at all levels of government but this is a good first step and I look forward to working with everyone involved in order to clean up this crisis as quickly as possible."

"This New law will help municipalities address the problem with greater urgency, both in Newark and statewide," **said Assemblywoman Pintor Marin**. "It's an extremely time-sensitive issue and by authorizing municipalities to enter properties to replace lead service lines, we can ensure the job gets done properly and expeditiously."

"Newark has already passed its own ordinance to allow entry onto private property so that the city can begin lead service line replacements," **said Assemblywoman Speight**. "If we implement what is happening locally on a statewide level, we'll be able to maximize the efficiency of our water infrastructure replacement projects and safeguard public health for communities throughout New Jersey."

"Access to clean drinking water is an irrevocable human right, as legislators we must ensure that right for every resident," **said Assemblyman Gary Schaer**. "All lead exposure carries significant health risks, but children are particularly vulnerable to suffering permanent damage. This law empowers municipalities to conduct lead service line replacements, protecting residents from further lifelong effects."

"Knowing where lead service lines are, having the political will and sufficient funds to take action is not enough if you can not gain access to the property to replace the water lines," **stated Amy Goldsmith, State Director, Clean Water Action**. "This is especially true in cities like Newark where most residents (75%) are renters and landlords largely absent. It made all the difference in the world when Newark took it upon themselves to adopt a local ordinance authorizing access. They now are now replacing lead service lines faster, more houses at a time, and at lower cost. This legislation (S4110) is critical to enabling other

municipalities to do the same without any legal road blocks. Whether you are a renter or homeowner, everyone deserves equal opportunities and protections from lead poisoning. We thank the legislative sponsors and governor for making this happen."

TRENTON - Governor Phil Murphy today signed S4141, also known as "Paul's Law", which will authorize parents or guardians to request the use of an individualized health care plan for students with epilepsy or seizure disorders. The law is named after Paul St. Pierre, a 13-year-old boy from Maple Shade who has epilepsy and advocated for the legislation.

"Every student deserves to learn and thrive in their educational environment, without worrying about their safety," **said Governor Murphy**. "Paul's Law will ensure that the safety of children with seizure disorders is a priority in our schools. I thank Paul and his family for bringing attention to this issue that affects so many parents and children across our state."

The legislation signed today authorizes a parent or guardian of a student with epilepsy or a seizure disorder to request use of an individualized health care plan. This individualized health care plan will be developed for each student by the school nurse, in consultation with the parent or guardian of a student with a seizure disorder and other appropriate medical professionals. The plan will be consistent with the recommendations of the student's health care providers and will outline a set of procedural guidelines that provide specific directions about what to do in an emergency. Additionally, boards of education will be required to ensure that all building staff are trained in the care of students with epilepsy and seizure disorders.

"It is impossible to describe the magnitude of Governor Murphy signing Paul's Law. This law will not only help my son Paul feel safe in school, it will protect 12,000 children in New Jersey that have epilepsy. Furthermore, It will give parents across the state peace of mind while their children are in school," **said Paul St. Pierre, the namesake of the law, and his mother, Colleen Quinn**. "None of this would have been possible without Senator James Beach who spearheaded this legislation after our initial meeting. He has shown us that citizens, even a 13 year old boy can help to make change in the world. We are forever grateful to him. Lastly, we would like to thank Governor Murphy for signing this legislation into law. Today our governor has made New Jersey only the 5th state in the nation to create seizure safe schools. We would like to thank Governor Murphy for making this law a reality."

"Schools must provide safe spaces for all children, including students who experience seizure disorders," **said Dr. Lamont O. Repollet, Commissioner of Education**. "Providing training to staff will enable adults to recognize the early signs of seizures in students and provide them with swift access to the care they need."

"Approximately 12,000 children in New Jersey have been diagnosed with epilepsy, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control," **said Department of Health Acting Commissioner Judith Persichilli**. "Paul St. Pierre is a brave young man and I commend him for his advocacy to help protect other children with this neurological disorder. It is critical that teachers, principals and other school personnel receive training in how to recognize and respond to a student experiencing a seizure in school. It's also important for parents to ensure their child's school has an up-to-date health plan for their child."

Primary sponsors of the legislation include Senators Jim Beach and Kip Bateman, and Assemblymembers Mila Jasey, Annette Quijano, and John McKeon.

"As a former teacher, I know that an unexpected crisis can occur at any time during the school day. However, if a student has a seizure disorder, appropriate training, complete information and an individualized health care plan can allow school personnel to be better prepared," **said Senator Beach**. "Thanks to the advocacy of Paul St. Pierre, this legislation will go a long way in educating our teachers and school personnel on how to handle a situation when one of their students has a seizure, whether it is in the classroom or at an after-school event."

"There are 12,000 students throughout New Jersey with a seizure disorder," **said Senator Kip Bateman**. "If you're the parent of a child with epilepsy, you want to be assured that all teachers, nurses, and school bus drivers are properly trained and can care for your child until advanced medical help arrives. I applaud Paul for his successful advocacy to ensure Garden State schools have the tools to create a 'seizure smart' epilepsy action plan which will save lives."

In a joint statement, **Assemblymembers Jasey, Quijano, and McKeon said:**

"It's vitally important that New Jersey's schools and teachers are well-equipped with the tools and knowledge to provide safe, enriching learning environments for students with epilepsy.

"In creating the mechanisms for schools to work with parents and guardians alongside nurses, teachers and administrators, children suffering from seizures would be guaranteed the extra support and care they need to see their full potential in the classroom realized.

"We'd like to give special thanks to Paul St. Pierre, who the bill is named for, and Miranda West, a Columbia High School student and National Epilepsy Foundation teen spokesperson, for their continued advocacy and help in ensuring New Jersey schools are safe for all students."

"Paul St. Pierre is a leader and a role model for all children living in New Jersey. Paul's advocacy not only for himself, but for the 12,000 children living with epilepsy in the Garden State, will make our schools a safer place for all children living with epilepsy," **said Liza Gundell, CEO of the Family Resource Network which includes Epilepsy Services of New Jersey.** "Children spend the majority of their day in school under the care of school personnel and in the company of their peers. Empowering educators and students with knowledge to not only recognize seizures, but the skills to act and treat a student who may be experiencing a seizure can ultimately save a child's life. Epilepsy Services of New Jersey is proud to provide monthly on-line seizure first aid and recognition training, as well as in-person training for school's throughout New Jersey. Paul's Law ensures that all New Jersey Schools are well-equipped with the tools necessary to provide a safe and enriching environment."

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