



36-INCH MAIN BREAK IN CHATTANOOGA ON SEPT. 12, 2019

A COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER

We thank the Chattanooga community for your patience and understanding during the recent partial interruption of water service. Your exceptional support means a great deal to our entire team. Tennessee American Water knows this event was not easy on anyone, and we are truly sorry. We are grateful to see how our community pulled together, neighbor helping neighbor, to deal with the challenges.

As Tennessee American Water employees worked around the clock applying their expertise to repair the broken main, every part of the community worked in coordination to respond. Through this adversity the best qualities of our community emerged as we came together to address the problem, which allowed Tennessee American Water to complete restoration efforts as safely as possible.

We appreciate the many kind words of encouragement from the community we serve. We are truly thankful for the support we received from County and City agencies along with other area agencies we worked with as we restored service to homes and businesses.

WHAT HAPPENED?

On the evening of September 12, Tennessee American Water and its contractors were working on a planned project to install a valve on a 36-inch transmission main, which is a large pipe for moving water. This project is designed

to enhance the ability of Tennessee American Water to maintain water service in the event of a main break or other interruption. While the valve work was being performed, workers noticed a large amount of water beginning to surface from a meter vault that was located near but was not part of the planned project. We have not identified the cause of the main break and concluding this evaluation is a priority.

(continued)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Tennessee American
Water Customer Service
Center:
1.866.736.6420
M-F, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
For emergencies, we're
available 24/7.

Check us out online
tennesseeamwater.com



Water Main Break



Crews Working on 36" Water Main Repair



**QUALITY. ONE MORE WAY
WE KEEP LIFE FLOWING.**



New Water Main Repaired with New Valve

The main break repair was completed by early Saturday morning, September 14, with the installation of a new permanent ductile iron pipe and 36-inch valve. After the repair, Tennessee American Water restored water pressure by turning valves back on, filling tanks and flushing hydrants to help reduce air in the distribution system and water discoloration. This process is methodical and takes time in order to avoid other main breaks or water quality issues.

By Saturday morning, September 14, impacted customers in lower elevations started seeing their water pressure improve or, if they were without water, their service restored. By Saturday afternoon, the majority of the impacted customers had their water service restored, and 24 hours later their precautionary boil water notice was lifted. By Sunday afternoon the highest elevation areas of the water system had their service restored, which meant all Tennessee American Water customers had water at their homes and businesses, with only a limited number of customers subject to the precautionary boil water notice.

EXACTLY, WHAT KIND OF WORK WAS UNDERWAY WHEN IT HAPPENED?

On Thursday evening, September 12, Tennessee American Water and its contractors were working on a planned project to install a valve on a 36-inch water transmission main. This new valve is an important part of a larger system improvement project focused on resiliency.

WHAT WE KNOW?

What we know is that we were performing a planned capital project, and, during the course of the work, workers noticed a large amount of water beginning to surface at a location near but not part of the project. We worked around the clock to reduce the flow of water to allow the repair of the main break and to restore the system.

HOW DID TENNESSEE AMERICAN WATER KEEP CUSTOMERS INFORMED?

Throughout this event, Tennessee American Water worked diligently to provide timely, factual information and updates to customers, in coordination with local agencies. We issued updates on the repair status and the progress toward restoration of service, to emergency operations personnel, customers, public officials and the media.

Tennessee American Water participated in seven press conferences throughout the main break event (September 13 - 16). The press conferences allowed us to coordinate with City and County agencies to publicly announce the latest developments, updates and progress of the repair and restoration process.

Tennessee American Water provided updates with color-coded maps in regular intervals through all the company's social media channels and website. The color-coded maps also were provided to the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Center to use during press conferences. We also distributed the maps to local agencies to post on their communication platforms thereby increasing the reach of status updates.

Tennessee American Water also used our CodeRED emergency notification system (reverse 911) to keep customers informed. These updates were communicated to our 24/7 customer service center.

WHAT DID TENNESSEE AMERICAN WATER DO TO HELP CUSTOMERS DURING THE OUTAGES?

Tennessee American Water deployed multiple water tankers after the main break and provided the majority of the bottled water supplied to the distribution sites that were expertly managed through the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Center. We also provided system information to the Chattanooga Fire Department, Tri-State Mutual Aid Association, Tennessee Statewide Mutual Aid, and the Tennessee Federation of Fire Chaplains and others that were mobilized and on standby to assure that fire suppression was available to all parts of the impacted area.

DID TENNESSEE AMERICAN WATER PROVIDE BOTTLED WATER AT DISTRIBUTION SITES?

Tennessee American Water purchased over half a million bottles of water that were distributed in coordination with the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Center and with the assistance of many volunteers. Throughout the restoration process, bottled water supplies were monitored and replenished as necessary as well as repositioned according to need. Additionally, Tennessee American Water had water tanker trucks available and ready to help when and where necessary.

WHY WERE YOU INITIALLY UNABLE TO PREDICT OR ESTIMATE WATER RESTORATION TIMES?

Delivering water service is a complex, multi-step, time-intensive process. The process can be further prolonged by air trapped in lines and by customer usage. Due to the geography, water must be restored to specific areas at specific levels before water can be pumped to the next area. This process and the fact that water takes time to move through complex networks of pipes, tanks and pumping stations, creates restoration times that can be difficult to predict. The restoration process is methodical and takes time in order to avoid other main breaks or water quality issues.

WHAT DOES A PRECAUTIONARY BOIL WATER NOTICE MEAN?

Tennessee American Water issued a precautionary boil water notice since we were not able to assure pressure throughout the entirety of the distribution system and low pressure may impact water quality. A precautionary boil water notice is not an indication that the water is unsafe. It means that due to low pressure conditions or other circumstances, customers are advised to take precautions until water quality is confirmed through testing. The testing process includes collecting water samples that are analyzed over a 24-hour time period to confirm that water quality has not been affected. Until the boil water notice was lifted, we asked customers to bring all water to a boil, let it boil for three (3) minutes, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. During a precautionary boil water notice, boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation until further notice.

AFTER WATER WAS RESTORED, WHY DID SOME CUSTOMERS HAVE WATER THAT WAS CLOUDY?

Cloudiness is typically caused by tiny air bubbles in the water. This occurs when air is trapped in the water, similar to carbonation in a bottle of soda. When you turn on your tap, the pressure is released, allowing the bubbles to appear, just as removing the cap from a soda bottle causes the soda to fizz. If you allow a glass of water to stand for a few moments, the air bubbles will rise to the surface and will usually clear from the bottom of the container up to the top. This phenomenon is called entrained air and does not affect the quality of your water.

WILL CUSTOMERS RECEIVE A CREDIT ON THEIR WATER BILL OR REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES AS A RESULT OF THE PARTIAL SERVICE INTERRUPTION?

We regret the recent fluctuation and partial interruption of water service. We devoted our full resources to completing the repair and providing water to as many customers as possible. No utility is able to guarantee uninterrupted service. When events such as these occur, we do not provide for billing adjustments or claims for customer reimbursement of expenses.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO PREVENT THIS FROM HAPPENING IN THE FUTURE?

Tennessee American Water is proud to have served the Chattanooga community for over 132 years. Recently, we have completed several resiliency projects that have further strengthened the water system. The planned valve work that was being performed the evening of the main break is a part of our piping improvement project. The installation of this valve allows us to turn off water at a main transmission line in case of emergency or to perform system upgrades.

Another phase of the resiliency project we recently completed is the installation of additional transmission bypass lines near the water treatment plant. These additional lines allow water to bypass, or divert, from one main transmission line to another transmission line. This gives us the ability to isolate large transmission lines in an effort to maintain water service.

Tennessee American Water makes investments in its systems on a consistent basis. We have invested an average of \$18 million annually in capital improvements to the drinking water system over the last five years for a total of \$92 million invested. Projects include replacing pipes, valves, hydrants, and meters throughout the system.



T E N N E S S E E
AMERICAN WATER

WE KEEP LIFE FLOWING™