



el paso
WATER

Northeast Water Main Break Emergency Response

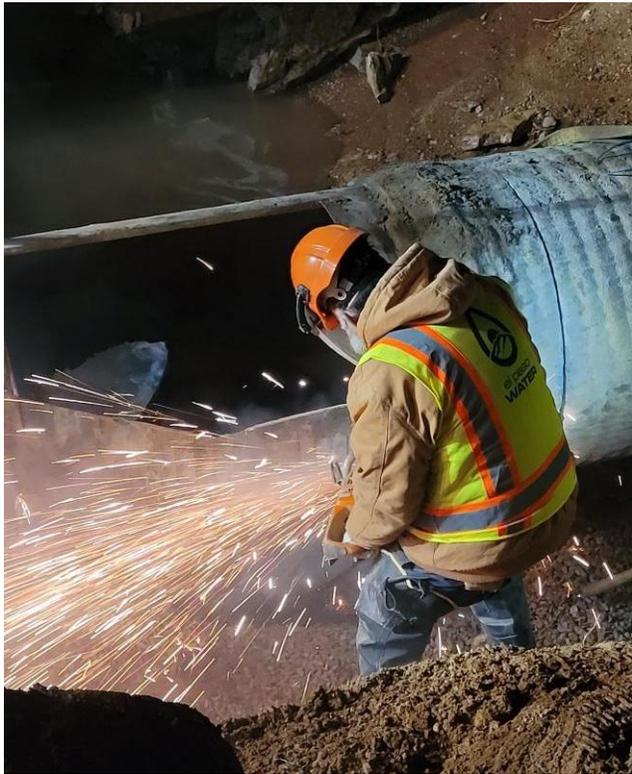
Presentation Outline

- What happened
- Event timeline
- How the break affected the distribution system
- EPWater response and OEM coordination
- Investing in proactive replacement projects
- What are the next steps
- Thanks to our partners and staff

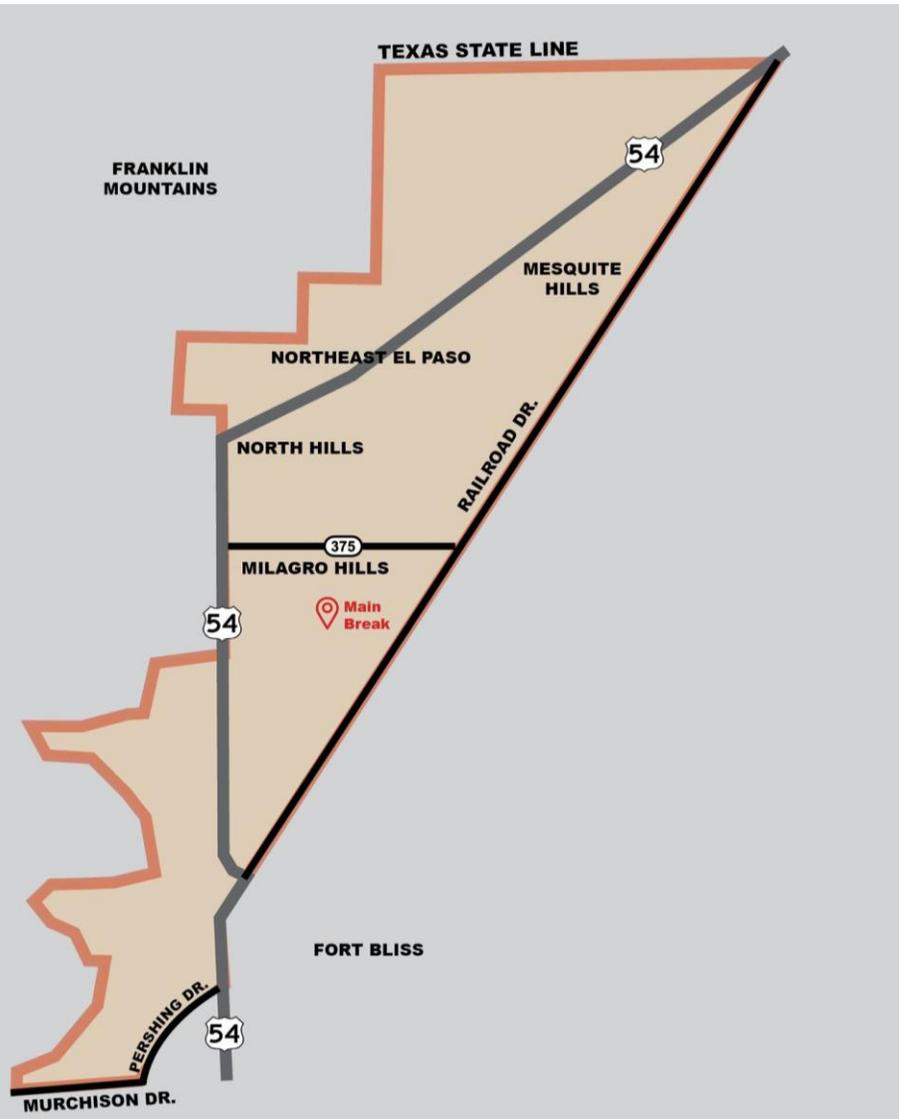
What happened

- Dispatch received a call about water in the street in Northeast El Paso. A crew is sent to the scene.
- Crews find a large 36-inch water main break near Gschwind Ave.
- The break sent water into a nearby home and into neighboring streets
- Field crews diverted water into open space along utility easement, stopping the flow of water into the neighborhood
- Crews shut off valves to try isolate the damaged main, leading to localized water outages

Scenes of Pipeline Repair Process



How the break affected the system



- The damaged main is connected to several smaller distribution lines and contributed to the draining of 15 water tanks, leading to the widespread outage
- Low water pressure and drained reservoirs led the utility to issue a boil water notice for the affected area, per TCEQ requirements
- The outage impacted an estimated 38,000 connections (homes and businesses), resulting in little or no water service
 - Many customers had service restored within 8 hours
 - Many more had service restored within 48 hours
 - All customers had service restored within 72 hours

EPWater Response and OEM Coordination

El Paso Water staff initiated emergency response protocols on Sunday morning (1/11)

- Engineers began reviewing schematics for Northeast distribution system to identify main and distribution lines.
- Logistics staff arranged for water distribution sites
- Water quality team coordinated with TCEQ and started protocol for issuance of boil water notice
- Customer service prepared for increase in calls
- Communications team engaged media and stakeholders
- EPWater had constant presence at the City-County OEM



EPWater Boardroom Converted to EOC

Water distribution for impact area

EPWater immediately worked to stand up four water distribution sites with water tankers and/or bottled water.

1. Sue Young Park
2. Arlington Park
3. Sunrise Park
4. Chisholm Park

With high demand, EPWater worked with partners to expand to three additional locations at:

5. Veterans Park
6. North Skies Park
7. Grandview Park



Boil Water Notice Precautions

Low water pressure and drained reservoirs led to the issuance a precautionary boil water notice for the affected area as required by TCEQ.

EPWater coordinated with TCEQ and conducted extensive water sampling.

Active communication efforts provided guidance to customers.

The Boil Water Notice was lifted at 2:05 p.m. on Jan. 15, 2026 – four days after issuance.

What To Do After A Boil Water Notice Is Lifted



It is recommended to **FLUSH** your faucets. You can flush your faucets by running your water on **COLD** for **5-15 MINUTES.**



Communication with Customers

- Daily press conferences with Mayor, Council Members, Emergency Operations
 - Resulted in significant news coverage in print and broadcast media
 - Provided scripts to 311
- Ten news releases and media advisories
- Frequent social media posts
- Stakeholder outreach
 - Government Partners
 - Schools
 - Childcare facilities
 - Senior Centers
 - Business & Medical facilities
 - Health Department/City County Health Authority



Property Damage Claims



- EPWater claims staff made contact with the family at 1:15 a.m. on Jan. 11 to begin assistance
- Damage appears to be limited to the immediate vicinity of the break location
- Utility claims team will continue to respond to property damage claims

Proactive projects aim to avoid similar breaks

Every year, El Paso Water's capital improvement plan includes projects to proactively replace aging pipelines to avoid major breaks and the impact they would have on the surrounding area.

Completed projects FY 25/26 include:

- Airway Boulevard 24-inch Waterline Replacement
- Yandell 24-inch Water Main Replacement
- Sheridan 16-inch Waterline replacement
- Lawton Drive and Prospect Drive Water Main Loop Improvements
- Loop 375 from Montana to Spur 601 48-inch (Loop 1)

EPWater continues to pipeline investments

Projects included in the FY26 budget include:

- McCombs Well Collector Replacement
- Large Diameter Pipeline Condition Assessment
 - Condition Assessment of WT Main along Gateway East
- Integrity Assessment for Large Diameter Pipelines
- Downtown 10 (TXDOT)
- Buffalo Soldier 24-inch replacement

Next steps

While we the utility continues to gather data on this incident and our response, our initial goals include:

- Formal after-action debrief
- Forensics analysis on pipeline segment
- Economic impact analysis
- Many more to come

Thanks to Our Community Partners

We want to express our sincere appreciation to many partners who stepped up to help their community:

- Mayor and Council Members
- City of El Paso staff
- Office of Emergency Management
- El Paso Police Department
- El Paso Fire Department
- Sun Metro
- Border RAC
- Fort Bliss
- El Pasoans Fighting Hunger
- El Paso Community Foundation
- Paso del Norte Community Foundation
- Red Cross
- Engineering firms
- Vendors and suppliers
- Restaurants and businesses
- Non-profits
- Private citizens

Thanks to Our Water Warriors

El Paso Water employees across all sections stepped in to assist in the emergency response efforts.

- Crews worked 24-7 on repairs
- Engineering teams developed short- and long-term solutions
- Staff supported water stations
- Customer service teams worked overtime and delivered water to over 200 seniors and disabled residents
- Water quality teams coordinated with regulators and responded to customer questions

