

MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers

From: CURO By: Jared Reese

CC: Justyn Hawkins and Anita Curran

Date: April 22, 2026

RE: The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Meeting 4/22/2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) Board of Directors met on Wednesday April 22, 2026. The complete packet for the meeting may be found [here](#).

A. 54-Inch Sewer Force Main Break on April 17

A sewer force main broke on April 17. SWBNO mobilized diving crews to assess the damage. The discharge continued throughout the week pending installation of line stops. The company anticipated completing line stops by Thursday or Friday. SWBNO expected extensive repair to take several weeks after the discharge stopped. SWBNO confirmed that the broken main did not impact drinking water and the lake pump station operated as normally.

SWBNO worked closely with the Coast Guard and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). The Coast Guard investigated the vessel that damaged SWBNO's force main. LDEQ guided sampling procedures conducted at the location of the break, the lock, and the high-rise bridge to address the immediate public health concerns. SWBNO stated they had not received a final report from the Coast Guard at the time of the meeting.

SWBNO installed protection structures around the water intakes in the Mississippi River. The structures had been struck multiple times, which justified the construction.

Crews excavated the pipe at the location and took measurements to fabricate the custom-fitted line stops required for the repairs. SWBNO planned to route sewage through another force main once they installed the line stops. SWBNO expected the rerouting to take longer but it eliminated broader impacts.

B. Lead Service Line Replacement Program

The selection committee chose CDM Smith as the program manager. The replacement contract with schools and early childhood centers continued. The program included over 600 public school district line replacements.

SWBNO developed one-pagers for to distribute to the public.

The materials advised residents:

- Use cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula.
- Run faucets for three to five minutes when water had not been used for six hours or longer.
- Use NSF 53-rated water filter pitchers or request one from SWBNO
- Request a lead test kit.
- Replace private service lines if possible.
- Consider corrosion control as extra protection.

The company planned to distribute this information at community meetings.

C. Dwyer Canal Sewer Discharge Investigation

SWBNO investigated sewer discharges and a reported sewer smell from Dwyer Canal over the past few years. The company engaged a third-party contractor specializing in pipe inspections to identify locations and subsurface defects in the sewer system. SWBNO conducted dye testing in late February on multiple streets near the canal. The dye testing conducted at Gayoso identified defects that SWBNO planned to address.

D. The Immediate Action Plan

The action plan contained six components:

SWBNO addressed emergent transmission mains. The company completed repairs on a 30-inch main at South Carrollton and finished repairs at Magnolia, Jackson, and Philip. The next projects were scheduled for South Claiborne and 4801 Florida.

The company conducted condition assessments on the oldest transmission mains. SWBNO conducted a leak detection test on a section of the 30-inch main. The company's next steps included receiving quotes for multiple in-line technologies with testing scheduled to begin in mid-May.

SWBNO issued a Request for Information (RFI) for assessment of repair and replacement technologies. The company scheduled the deadline for responses to questions on April 17th and submittals on April 30.

The company developed near and medium-term priorities for the 30-inch water main on Magnolia in addition to other transmission main projects. SWBNO planned to develop more comprehensive lists after they received the results of initial condition assessments.

SWBNO evaluated hydraulic conditions. The selection committee chose Owen & White to update the potable water hydraulic model for a targeted area. Next steps included awarding the contract to the selected bidder and proceeding with contract negotiations.

The company planned to develop a citywide condition assessment, which it planned to issue the drafted RFI later in 2026.

SWBNO planned to make the transmission main action plan available on the website and social media. Additionally, SWBNO used door hangers in the past as a cost-effective method, but considered the budgetary constraints of paper notifications. The company considered other methods.