



Keyser officials endorse homeowner insurance for utility lines

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KEYSER – The Keyser City Council has endorsed a partnership with an insurance company that will offer residents repair-coverage of water and sewer lines between the street and the dwelling.

The Council voted unanimously at its Aug. 24 meeting to approve the arrangement with Utility Service Partners, a Pennsylvania firm whose insurance products have been endorsed by the National League of Cities.

Utility Service Partners provides insurance for the repair of water and sewer lines in the area between the home and the main utility line, where the homeowner is responsible for repairs. With lines buried several feet deep, excavation and other expenses can make for a repair bill totaling thousands of dollars.

Utility Service Partners offers coverage for about \$4 a month for water lines, and \$5 for sewer lines, which secures up to \$4,000 for repair work, as well as additional funding for required street or sidewalk cuts. Repair work is performed by local plumbers who work with the company, usually within 24 hours.

The company reports that its claim-approval rate is 98 percent.

According to a company representative who briefed the Council at the meeting, Utility Service Partners maintains a 97 percent customer satisfaction rate. The coverage is not mandatory, and there is no cost to the city.

Utility Service Partners operates in 16 states. Nine West Virginia municipalities are affiliated with the company, including Beckley, Buckhannon, Clarksburg and Moundsville.

With the City Council's endorsement, the company will send letters to residents of Keyser inviting them to participate in the program. Future outreach efforts will be conducted twice a year. The coverage can be dropped at any time.

For more information on Utility Service Partners, visit the company's Web site at www.utilitysp.net.

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