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By ELLY GRIMM

• Leader & Times

People in areas of Liberal will soon be experiencing some water outages as Liberal's water department prepares to replace a water line between Western Avenue and Stadium Avenue north of the fairgrounds.

"We've had numerous breaks on it, and the repairs are starting to be more costly than actually replacing it," said Calvin Burke, director of water services.

The decision to go ahead and replace the line was approved at the most recent city commission meeting on Tuesday.

Guadalupe Limon, the distribution supervisor for the water department, said discussion about repairing the line came up while the department was working on repairing other water lines at 11th and Stadium and going north to 15th Street.

“We got all those new lines up there and now all the old lines are breaking,” said Limon. “And we knew that we wanted to look at this one day or another but now’s the time because we’re having a little bit more breaks.”

The department waited to replace the line because until this point, the pipe was still in working condition with only the repairs. However, the age of the line came into play, and it was deemed necessary to replace the whole line.

“Unfortunately, when you get the first break, you’re like ‘OK that’s the first one we’ve had,’ so you repair it and then it gets to a certain point when you say ‘OK our line is actually deteriorated,’ Burke explained. “I mean, we can put a brand new line in and that brand new line could get hit with a water hammer, air hammer or something else and break the first week it’s in there, so you don’t make a decision the first time the line breaks to replace it.”

The department will be doing some of the work in-house from part of the departments’s budget for repairs, and it will also be working with King Enterprise. The project will cost around \$95,000 total, which Burke says will cause the department to readjust its budget in some areas. During the repairs, the department will also be putting in new water lines feeding the fire hydrants.

The streets that will be affected by these upcoming repairs include Nelson, Fairview, Sunset, Western Drive and Stadium. However, Limon assured there will be plenty of notice given to the citizens who live in those areas in the event of water outages.

“We’ve got new valves on that north side but still, the valves that are feeding to Fairview and Nelson and everything in between, they’re going to be affected because their valves are the old 8-inch line,” Limon explained. “We’re definitely going to post something in the paper for when we’re going to do everything and then we’ll also probably be going door to door notifying customers.”

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