

Aiken Water Main Breaks Will Continue

Robert A. Leishear, PhD, 2/10/2025

The following letter was sent to the Aiken Mayor, all Aiken City Council members, the City Manager, and the Engineering Director. No responses were received. Links to mentioned presentations are available: "Aiken water main breaks can be stopped", <https://1drv.ms/p/c/27d920bc97e9a114/EexrO-eyjpBAp1LBrgwukboBt3CMmHHnr5HMD2nrXRZKQg?e=srgrYN> and "Aiken water main breaks can be stopped, Part II", https://1drv.ms/p/c/27d920bc97e9a114/ET-TElfc2TZDuU6svkXoskkBC60TKyMfBu3VjGJhSpY_qg?e=bep6zo

The city of Aiken has thrown away an opportunity to stop our water main breaks and reduce tax burdens and health hazards. I have lost my fight with our city to stop water main breaks. However, the losers in this fight are the residents of Aiken.

The City of Aiken chooses to destroy our water mains, which supply our drinking water, water for businesses, and water to stop fires. Our mains keep on breaking.

I recently met with the Mayor, City Council, and Aiken staff in a Workshop to talk about how we can stop water main breaks. The City Manager stated that half of last year's breaks were caused when contractors broke mains while digging, which certainly sounds like a lot of mistakes. The other 20 breaks were caused by water hammers, which are caused by operations of pumps, fire hydrants and valves.

As a world-class expert in water hammers, I have repeatedly offered my services, and services of supporting contractors, without cost to Aiken by pursuing government grants. Aiken declined my most recent offer, stating that the problem is being addressed - nonsense. Our mains keep on breaking, will continue to break, will threaten our health, and the number of breaks will increase as we destroy our water system.

For over six years, Aiken staff have been waiting to see if they will fix our water main breaks. Aiken has failed to stop our water main breaks - just read the papers. Aiken spent untold millions of dollars on their water system, and water mains are still breaking.

In our meeting, false information was provided by city staff to the Mayor and Council to dissuade support for my efforts to stop breaking water mains. For example, the City Manager, made incorrect accusations when he said that I claimed that I could stop 'all' water main breaks and incorrectly claimed that tree roots are a primary cause of breaks. My offer to provide a second Workshop presentation to correct falsehoods was refused.

That is, a free consultant with unparalleled qualifications to stop water main breaks was turned down. What is going on in the backrooms of Aiken government? Our water main breaks can be stopped.

I did not make these statements lightly. Water hammers break water mains, and my expertise in water hammers is founded in more than 20,000 hours of volunteer research at a personal cost of more than \$200,000. I wrote 55 publications related to water main breaks, earned master's and doctoral degrees in Mechanical Engineering, a master's degree in Nuclear Engineering, a Fellow award from the American

Society of Mechanical Engineers, a Mensa award for intellectual achievement, and certifications for corrosion and corrosion control. In fact, I opened my business to prevent water hammer disasters in different industries, which include the water industry.

Again, what is going on in Aiken government? We can stop water main breaks.