

## **Steel tariffs affect Waukesha drinking water**

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**Dan Duchniak, Waukesha Water Utility General Manager:** We are coming into Waukesha on Racine Avenue.

**Kent Wainscott, WISN Reporter:** After nearly two decades, fighting for the right to get Lake Michigan drinking water, Waukesha's plans hit an unexpected obstacle.

**Dan:** We were starting to see cost estimates come back from the steel suppliers that were about 25% to 30% higher than what we had originally anticipated.

**Kent:** Waukesha City leaders are considering several types of lines to move the drinking water they'll purchase from Milwaukee, but because of rising prices due to tariffs, steel pipes are out.

**Kent:** They did take one of the options off the table.

**Dan:** It did take one of our options off the table.

**Kent:** It will require nearly 35 miles of pipes to bring the water from Milwaukee to a new pumping station in Waukesha and then treat it and return it to the lake via the Root River in Franklin. The utility will now decide whether to use the more common ductile cast iron pipes, concrete, or fiberglass, keeping cost in mind. And making that decision now, early in the process, to avoid rising steel prices could save Waukesha money twice, both on the pipes and the planning. That's because each type of pipe requires plans for a different kind of trench and installation.

**Dan:** If you're not going to have something that's going to be competitive, then why complete the engineering design for that product? We can save that money on the front end.

**Kent:** It's a decision he says became increasingly clear as steel prices continued to rise

**Kent:** And the bids to install those water pipes expected to go out about a year from now. We know they won't be steel pipes, but whatever type they use: the first of them could be going in the ground before the end of next year. Reporting live from Milwaukee's southwest side, I'm Kent Wainscott WISN 12 News.

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