Why are there elevated levels of lead in the drinking water and what is being done to reduce the levels? *(Continued)*

Danvers Water Division treats your water to make it less corrosive, thereby reducing the leaching of lead into drinking water. We have recently worked closely with Woodard and Curran Engineering firm to optimize our corrosion control treatment and this in turn will help to reduce possible exposure to lead in the drinking water.

Please share this information on lead with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please call (978) 774-5054 or use the contact information below if you have additional question about lead in drinking water or need translating this information.

Jason McCarthy
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For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit:

- **EPA's website at** http://www2.epa.gov/lead, of call the EPA lead hotline at 1-800-424- 5323
- **MassDEP's website at** https://www.mass.gov/service-details/is-there-lead-in-my-tap-water
- **Department of Public Health's website at** https://www.mass.gov/orgs/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention-program

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(978) 774-5054

Danvers Water Division

Important Information About Lead In Drinking Water

Why am I receiving this brochure?

Danvers Water Division found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes during the June 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018 monitoring period. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

Under the Lead and Copper Rule, 90% of samples tested are required to be under the action level for lead which is 15 parts per billion (ppb). During the 2018 sampling period, 88.2% of homes participating in the Lead and Copper Rule tested below the action level for lead. All of the samples in the 88.2% were below 10ppb with 40% of those samples having no lead detected at all. If you would like more information on these test results, please contact the water department with the contact information provided in this letter.

US EPA and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) require public water systems that exceed the lead action level to provide this notification to consumers. Lead is a health concern and is commonly found in the environment; most commonly in lead-based paint. Lead can also be found in water, though at much lower levels.

Health Effects of Lead

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults

Health Effects of Lead *(Continued)*

with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Common sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint, household dust, soil, and some plumbing materials and fixtures. Lead can also be found in other household items such as pottery, makeup, toys, and even food. Lead paint was outlawed in 1978, but dust from homes that still have lead paint is the most common source of exposure to lead. Therefore, make sure to wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead.

The water provided by Danvers Water Division is lead-free when it leaves the water treatment plant and our well facilities. Local distribution pipes that carry the water to your community are made mostly of cast iron and cement lined ductile iron, and therefore do not add lead to water. However, lead can get into tap water through lead piping, lead solder used in plumbing, and some brass faucets and fixtures. You cannot see, taste, or smell lead in the water. Even though the use of lead solder was banned in the U.S. in 1986, it still might be present in older homes.

The corrosion or wearing-away of these lead-based materials can add lead to tap water, particularly if water sits for a long time in the pipes before use. Therefore, water that has been sitting in household pipes for several hours, such as in the morning, or after returning from work or school, is more likely to contain lead. If high levels of lead are found in drinking water, water may typically contribute up to 20 percent of a person's exposure to lead. However, infants who consume mostly formula, mixed with lead-containing water, can receive up to 60 percent of their exposure from water.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water

Listed below are steps that you can take to reduce your exposure to lead and copper in drinking water:

- **Run your water to flush out lead- Fresh water is better than stale:** If your water has been sitting for several hours, run the water until it is consistently cold-this usually takes about 15-30 seconds-before drinking or cooking with it. This flushes water which may contain lead from pipes. Run water for 5 minutes if you have a lead service line or any lead pipes in your home plumbing.
- **Use cold, fresh water for cooking and preparing baby formula:** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.
- **Do not boil your water to remove lead or copper. Boiling water will not reduce lead.** Excessive boiling of water makes the lead and copper more concentrated - the lead and copper remains when the water evaporates.

Other options consumers can take to reduce exposure

- **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures containing lead or lead solder.** Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law previously allowed end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8 percent lead to be labeled as "lead free." As of January 4, 2014, end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, fittings and valves, must meet the new "lead-free" definition of having no more than 0.25 percent lead on a weighted average. If you are concerned about lead in tap water, you should consider buying a low-lead or no-lead fixture. Contact NSF to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures and how to identify lead-free certification marks on new fixtures.
- **Test your home for lead:** The only way to determine the level of lead in drinking water at your home is to have the water tested by a state certified laboratory. The cost to test is usually between $10 and $50. Consider having your paint tested also. A list of labs is available online at http://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DEP/Labcert/Labcert.aspx or you can call MassDEP at 978-682-5237 or e-mail Labcert@state.ma.us. You may also contact us at 978-774-5054, to find out how to get your water tested for lead and copper.
- **Consider alternative sources or treatment of water.** If your water contains lead you may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. If considering a filter read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800- NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality. Also, if you are considering using bottled water, note that it may cost up to 1,000 times more than tap water. Simply flushing your tap, as described above, is usually a cheaper and equally effective alternative.
- **Contact your health care provider or your local health department to find out if your child needs to be tested for lead.** A blood lead level test is the only way to know if your child is being exposed to lead. For more information on Massachusetts' childhood lead testing program, contact the Department of Public Health (DPH) at https://www.mass.gov/orgs/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention-program or at 1-800-532-9571.
- **If you have health concerns,** please contact your health care provider with any questions.

Additional Information on Lead content in plumbing materials

Presently, the law allows many faucets to contain lead, even if they are labeled as "lead free". As of 2014, these products must contain no more than 0.25% lead. New faucets meeting the NSF 61 "lead-free" standard will have NSF 61 stamped on the new faucet's cardboard box, but these faucets may still contain lead. Some faucet manufactures produce plastic or new low-lead brass faucets that have virtually zero lead, but you will have to check with the manufacturer. Prior to 2014, the 0.25% lead test was optional, and products manufactured before then require additional certification to show compliance with the current law.

Why are there elevated levels of lead in the drinking water and what is being done to reduce the levels?

The water provided by Danvers Water Division is lead-free when it leaves the water treatment plant and well facilities. However, lead can get into tap water though lead service lines, lead solder used in plumbing, and some brass fixtures.

Danvers Water Division is concerned about lead in your drinking water. We have both an extensive testing program and have treated the water to make it less corrosive. Although the majority of homes have tested for no or very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes may still have lead levels above the EPA and State Action Level of 15 parts per billion (ppb).

To monitor lead levels, Danvers Water Division tests tap water in homes that are most likely to have lead. These homes are usually older homes that may have lead service lines or lead solder, and they must be tested after water has been sitting for over 6 hours. The EPA rule requires that 90% of these "worst-case" samples must have lead levels below the Action Level of 15 ppb.