



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Administration–Engineering–Water–Sewer–Facilities
Parks–Forestry–Highway–Sanitation–Cemetery–Fleet

City Hall, 562 Main St.,
Melrose, MA 02176

MELROSE DRINKING WATER NOTICE

Some homes have high levels of lead.

This notice contains important information about your drinking water. Have someone translate it for you or speak with someone who understands it.

Our water system exceeded the lead drinking water action level. The Melrose Department of Public Works (DPW) Engineering Division routinely monitors for lead in water in homes with lead service lines as they are more likely to have elevated lead levels. Melrose is required to collect 20 samples between July 1st and October 31st. Four of these higher risk homes had elevated lead levels. The results of these routine samples for lead indicate a 90th percentile level of 0.0163 mg/L (or 16.3 parts per billion). This level exceeds the lead action level of 0.015 mg/L (or 15 parts per billion). This means that more than 10 percent of the lead samples collected were above the lead action level.

What does this mean?

The City of Melrose gets water from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). The MWRA water entering the Melrose system does not contain high levels of lead. Our system's water mains that carry the water to you are made mostly of cast iron or ductile iron, and therefore do not add lead to water. However, lead can get into tap water through the service line that connects your home to the water main if it is made of lead. Lead may also come from lead solder used to connect pipes in home plumbing, and from some faucets and fixtures.

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.

What should I do to reduce my exposure to lead?

- **Use only cold, fresh water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.** Run the water for at least 1 minute or until it turns cold.
- **Do not boil the water to remove lead.**
- **Find out if your home has a lead service line. IF YOU DO, HAVE IT REMOVED.** Please contact Melrose DPW Engineering Division at 781-979-4172 for more information about your home's service line, how to have it removed, or for information about plumbing materials in your home that may contain lead.
- **Contact your health care provider if you have any health-related questions or contact your local health department to find out if your child needs to be tested for lead.**

What is our system doing?

Our public water system is taking the following actions to address the situation:

- The City of Melrose gets water from the MWRA. Starting in 1996, MWRA began adjusting the pH and buffering capacity of the water to make it less corrosive, and has steadily fine-tuned these treatments over time, thereby reducing the leaching of lead into drinking water. Due to this treatment change, lead levels found in sample tests of tap water have dropped around 80 to 90 percent. Because lead levels in home plumbing can vary, individual homes may occasionally have higher test results.

- Melrose DPW Engineering Division is working with an engineering consultant to compile an inventory of the service line materials in the City's entire water distribution system. The data in the inventory is being confirmed through research of records, building inspections, and test pits.
- Melrose DPW Engineering Division notifies property owners with confirmed lead services and provides information related to replacement of private-side services.
- Melrose DPW Engineering Division offers a \$1000 reimbursement to private owners who replace their private side lead service connection.
- Melrose DPW Engineering Division is actively identifying and removing municipal-side lead services. The City is required to remove at least 25 "full" lead services per year.

For more information, contact Melrose DPW Engineering Division at 781-979-4172 or visit the City's website at Cityofmelrose.org/Engineering.

Please share this information 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.

This notice is being sent to you by Melrose DPW Engineering Division.

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