

North Haven Water Department Customers,

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the issues and concerns associated with the “Lead in Drinking Water” notification sent to all customers of the North Haven Water Department in September of 2010. The Water Department is required to test its water annually for lead and copper at various customer locations in order to obtain results representative of the entire distribution system. If ten percent of the results (which in North Haven’s small system this is *one* sample from *one* house) are over what the federal government deems a safe lead level, we are required to notify *all* the customers. The required federally issued paper work included with the mailing may be hard to interpret. I hope this letter will help simplify what that literature is trying to communicate.

The point that needs to be emphasized is that the water produced at the treatment plant and pumped into the system DOES NOT HAVE LEAD IN IT. The water, however, has, as all water does, the ability to break down metals such as lead, copper, and brass over time. This fact is not made very clear in the notification you received. If a building’s water tests high for lead, all of that lead came from the piping in *that* specific structure, *not* from the distribution system. If your home has old plumbing, your odds of higher amounts of lead in the water also increase. Keep in mind that our test results show that 90 percent of homes fall below the government’s safe lead levels.

If you are concerned that your home may have elevated levels of lead in the water due to antiquated plumbing, or would just like to know, lead test kits are available through the water department and I would be glad to offer assistance to ensure proper sampling. The test cost is ten dollars and can be simply sent through the mail. You should know that the North Haven Community School, Waterman’s Community Center, and the Clinic have all been tested and are far below lead levels deemed unsafe for drinking. The water department is currently using soda ash to increase the water’s pH and to reduce its potential corrosiveness. The effect of this treatment will hopefully be reflected in future water samples.

For those who may be further concerned, there are some simple steps you can take to help protect yourself from lead in your drinking water:

- Run the water for at least 15 seconds or until it becomes noticeably colder before using it for drinking or cooking.
- Do not drink or cook with water from the hot water faucet. Hot water can dissolve lead more quickly than cold water.
- Do not use water from the hot water faucet to prepare baby formula.
- Boiling the water does *not* reduce lead levels

On another note, you may have noticed the Town water has been slowly becoming more yellow in color over the past few years. The coloration has been caused by the gradual decline in the ability of the treatment plant’s ozone generators to produce enough ozone to reduce the color of the raw water from the Fresh Pond. Five new ozone generators have been installed, wired, and plumbed and went online at the beginning of May. The reduction in yellow color will not be instant, as the newly produced clearer water will be diluted by the existing water for some time.

I hope this information helps to clear up any concerns or confusion amongst the customers of North Haven Water Department. Please feel free to call me with any questions, concerns, or clarifications anytime.

Thank you,
Glen Marquis
867-2333