

During a recent monitoring sampling period for lead and copper in the City of Warwick water system, lead results exceeded the acceptable action levels. It should be emphasized that only four households out of 30 tested exceeded the acceptable federal level (15PPB or lower).

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If a public water system exceeds this level, it is not considered a drinking water violation and water is considered safe to drink throughout the entire distribution system. Regular daily testing is performed throughout the distribution system to comply with federal requirements under the Safe Drinking Act. However, it is recommended that the entire curb stop and service be replaced at affected properties.

The City of Warwick's distribution system has nearly 26,500 water customers and less than one percent (225 households) has been identified as having a lead service. Affected properties are primarily concentrated in the Pawtuxet, Lakewood and Hillsgrove area near Route 37. The Water Department notified these property owners in a letter last November, with a follow up letter in January of this year to those who did not respond to the first notification.

According to federal regulations, the Water Department must take the following steps: increase monitoring of lead levels for the foreseeable future until levels revert to an acceptable PPB and replace at least seven percent of all lead services on a yearly basis until all are replaced or until monitoring indicates compliance with the lead action level pursuant to regulatory requirements (The city plans to accelerate and exceed the require amount during upcoming construction seasons). The department has already complied with an educational outreach component through the mailing of the letters to affected property owners; some have already coordinated the replacement of their lead service and interior piping.

Residents with questions or concerns are asked to call the Water Division at 738-2000, ext. 6601 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.