



# HOUSATONIC WATER WORKS COMPANY

SINCE 1897

## PRESS RELEASE

### **ELEVATED COPPER AND LEAD LEVELS DETECTED IN TESTED WATER**

During our most recent round of Copper and Lead testing which consisted of twenty homes throughout our distribution system selected by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) elevated Copper and/or Lead levels were detected.

Copper and Lead can enter drinking water when pipes that contain Copper and Lead corrode, especially when water has high acidity or low mineral content that corrodes pipes and fixtures. The most common source is internal plumbing materials containing lead brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and fixtures with lead solder, from which significant amounts of lead can enter into the water, especially hot water.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set the maximum contaminant level goal for Lead in drinking water at zero because Lead is a toxic metal that can be harmful to human health even at low exposure levels. Lead is persistent, and it can accumulate in the body over time and cause health issues.

Young children, infants, and fetuses are particularly vulnerable to lead because the physical and behavioral effects of Lead occur at lower exposure levels in children than in adults.

#### **What you can Do:**

**Flush your pipes before drinking:** The more time water has been sitting in your home's pipes, the more Copper and Lead they may contain. Anytime the water in a particular faucet has not been used for six hours or longer, "flush" your cold-water pipes by running the water until it becomes as cold as it will get. This could take as little as five to thirty seconds if there has been recent heavy water use such as showering or toilet flushing. Otherwise, it could take longer.

#### **What we are Doing :**

We are currently scheduling additional water testing and investigating possible reasons for the elevated readings. Our water does not have high acidity or low mineral content that corrodes pipes and fixtures - a common culprit. Other sources may be new plumbing, improper grounding of electrical services or sampling errors. We are preparing more information which will be forthcoming in a separate mailing to all customers later this month. Also watch our website ([www.housatonicwater.com](http://www.housatonicwater.com)) for updates.

In the interim please contact our office with any questions or concerns.

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