**Instructions for Using Lead Public Education Template Language**

In order to meet EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Drinking Water Regulations 310 CMR 22.06B MassDEP Drinking Water Program has prepared the following instructions for a lead education template.

MassDEP's regulation 310 CMR 22.06B (6)(a)1 requires that language in 310 CMR 22.06B (6)(a)1a. must be included in the materials exactly as written, except for the text in brackets where the water system must include system specific information. Any additional information presented by a water system must be consistent with the information below and be in plain language that can be understood by the general public. **Water systems that would like to use language other than what is listed below must obtain MassDEP’s written approval of the content of written public materials prior to delivery.**

The following language includes all the information needed to meet the federal rule and MassDEP drinking water regulations. Public Water Systems (PWS) may use this information to notify customers that the PWS exceeded the 90th percentile for lead based on tap water samples collected in accordance with 310 CMR 22.06B(7).

Please note there is no requirement to provide Copper Public Education when the copper action level is exceeded. However, PWS that exceed the copper action level are encouraged to provide consumers with information from the MassDEP Copper and Your Health fact sheet at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/copper-and-your-health>

Please note in accordance with 310 CMR 22.06B (11)(f) PWS must provide written documentation to MassDEP demonstrating compliance with Public Education Program requirements.

**If your system failed the lead action level, you must use the language below or obtain prior written approval from MassDEP for alternate language. Update all highlighted information.**

**Your notice must include the topic areas in bold below**. ***Anything in italics under each topic area is required language and cannot be changed* while anything in regular text must be covered,but you have the flexibility to use either the suggested language or your own words to cover these topics in non-italicareas.**

**Please remember all records are required to be maintained for 12 years.**

**[Name of public water system]**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN DRINKING WATER**

**Why am I receiving this brochure?**

***You must include the following sentence if PWS exceeds the lead action level****:* [insert PWS name] found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings during the [insert monitoring period (e.g. please use the monitoring period listed on your MassDEP Review Summary Sheet)]. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant people and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

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

# *You must include the following health effects information*

# Health Effects of Lead

# *There is no safe level of lead in drinking water. Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Some of the health effects to infants and children include decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can also result in new or worsened learning and behavior problems. The children of persons who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy may be at increased risk of these harmful health effects. Adults have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems. Contact your health care provider for more information about your risks.*

# 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.

Only use the following sentence if the PWS has monitoring results documenting source water lead levels. If applicable, The water provided by [insert PWS name] is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs/well [indicate the type of water source]. Local distribution pipes that carry the water to your community are made mostly of iron and steel [insert additional piping material specific to your PWS], 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:

* **Use only cold, fresh water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.** Run your water. The more time water has been sitting in your home’s pipes, the more lead it may contain.
* **Before drinking, flush your home’s pipes by running the tap, taking a shower, doing laundry, or doing a load of dishes.** The amount of time to run the water will depend on whether your home has a lead service line or not, as well as the length and diameter of the service line and the amount of plumbing in your home. If you are not familiar with the structural and plumbing details of your residence, run the water for at least one (1) minute or until after it turns cold.

For more information about building flushing, see <https://www.mass.gov/doc/massdep-building-flushing-information/>.

* **Use only cold, fresh water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula:** If your water has been sitting for several hours, run the water for at least one minute or until it is consistently cold before drinking, cooking, or preparing baby formula with it. This flushes water which may contain lead that has come from the pipes, pipe joints, or certain plumbing fixtures in your home/building. Run water for 5 minutes if you know you have a lead service line or any lead pipes in your home plumbing.
* **Do not boil the water to remove lead.** Excessive boiling of water makes the lead more concentrated - the lead 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. Previously, end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8 percent lead were allowed 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 lead-free fixture. Contact [NSF](http://www.nsf.org/) to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures and how to identify lead-free certification marks on new fixtures.
* **Check whether your home or building has a lead service line. IF YOU DO, HAVE IT REMOVED.**
* [If applicable” Learn what your service line material is by checking your home or building address at [PWS website]].
* Please contact [insert PWS contact information] for more information about your home or building service line, how to have it removed, or for information about plumbing materials in your home that may contain lead.
* You may use EPA’s Protect Your Tap tool to help identify if your service line is lead – see [www.epa.gov/pyt](http://www.epa.gov/pyt).
* **Test your home or building for lead:** The only way to determine the level of lead in drinking water at your home/buildings to have the water tested by a state certified laboratory. 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 e-mail Labcert@mass.gov. You may also contact us at [Insert PWS contact information] to find out how to get your water tested for lead.
* **Learn about construction in your neighborhood that could disturb your service line.** Contact your public water supplier to find out about any construction or maintenance work that could disturb your service line. Activities that physically disturb the service line may cause more lead to be released from a lead service line if present.
* **Consider alternative sources or treatment of your water if your water contain lead*.*** 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](http://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 any health-related questions about lead,** please contact your health care provider.

**Additional Information on lead content in plumbing materials**

Prior to 2014, plumbing materials like faucets that contained up to 8% of lead were deemed “lead free”.  In 2011, Congress enacted legislation prohibiting the use and introduction into commerce of any pipes, fittings and fixtures, like faucets. that contain more than a weighted average of 0.25% lead based on wetted surfaces. Massachusetts incorporated the requirement into the plumbing code at https://www.mass.gov/doc/248-cmr-10-uniform-state-plumbing-code/download. The link below will help you identify the marks on products that are certified as “lead free” by a third-party certification body:

[How to Identify Lead Free Certification Marks for Pipes, Fittings, Fixtures, Solder, and Flux Used for Drinking Water](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-06/how-to-id-lead-free-certified-drinking-water-products-epa_june-2024.pdf).

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

Choose one of the following paragraphs depending on whether you treat your water for corrosion control

If you treat your water for corrosion control you may use the following language

* If applicable, only use the following sentence if the PWS has monitoring results documenting source water lead levels. The water provided by [insert PWS name] is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs/well [indicate the type of water source]. However, lead can get into tap water though lead service lines, lead solder used in plumbing, and some brass fixtures.
* [Insert PWS name] 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 [if applicable). Although most homes/buildings have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes/buildings may still have lead levels above the EPA and State Action Level of 15 parts per billion (ppb).

# To monitor lead levels, [insert PWS name] 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 overnight. The EPA rule requires that 90% of these worst-case samples must have lead levels below the Action Level of 15 ppb.

* [Insert PWS name] treats your water to make it less corrosive, thereby reducing the leaching of lead into drinking water. Starting in [insert date that corrosion control was implemented], [insert PWS name] [insert treatment specific to your system e.g. increased the pH and buffering capacity of the water] and has steadily fine-tuned these levels since corrosion control treatment began.

Due to this treatment change, lead levels found in sample tests of tap water have dropped over [insert percent of decrease] since [insert date that corrosion control was implemented]. [Insert if applicable: The [insert PWS name] service area has been below the Lead Action Level since [insert date that system has been below action level, if applicable]. Because lead levels in home plumbing can vary, individual communities may occasionally have higher test results.

If you do not treat your water for corrosion control you may use the following language

* If applicable, only use the following sentence if the PWS has monitoring results documenting source water lead levels. The water provided by [insert PWS name] is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs/well [indicate the type of water source]. However, lead can get into tap water though lead service lines, lead solder used in plumbing, and some brass fixtures. [Insert PWS name] is concerned about lead in your drinking water. We have a testing program for lead. Although most homes/buildings have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes/buildings may still have lead levels above the EPA and State Action Level of 15 parts per billion (ppb).

# To monitor lead levels, [insert PWS name] 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 overnight. The EPA rule requires that 90% of these worst-case samples must have lead levels below the Action Level of 15 ppb.

* [Insert PWS name] is in the process of evaluating the need for corrosion control treatment and expects to complete this study by [DATE].

**Insert a graph of your systems 90th percentile lead levels over time (Optional)**



**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

Call us at [insert PWS phone number] or [email address] or visit our website at [insert website if applicable] to find out what else we are doing about lead, such as home testing kits or a lead service line replacement program.

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

* EPA’s website at <https://www.epa.gov/>, or 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>

[PWS Name]

[PWS ID#]

[PWS address]

[City/Town, MA Zip Code]

[PWS Phone Number]

Date of mailing or posting: XXXXX