Public Advisory for Drinking Water Customers in the City of Royal Oak

October 29, 2019

In 2018, the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act's "Lead and Copper Rule" was amended to better detect lead in drinking water and protect your health. These changes require communities to focus sampling at lead service line locations, increase the number of sampling locations, and draw multiple samples from each location. This new, more rigorous sampling method is expected to result in higher lead results found at sample sites, not because the water source or quality has changed, but because of the Rule's more stringent sampling procedures and analysis.

The City of Royal Oak has been conducting testing of tap water in homes with lead service lines for lead and copper in accordance with this Act since 1992.
During the 2019 monitoring period, the city collected samples from 30 sites with known lead service lines. 'Service lines' are the pipes that connect homes to the city's water mains. Out of 23,741 total service connections, the city estimates 6%, or approximately 1,400 services, were constructed with lead or lead-containing materials.

Eight of the 30 sites tested exceeded concentration levels of 15 ppb (parts per billion). Compliance testing procedures require water in the plumbing to sit stagnant for a minimum of six hours prior to testing. 15 ppb is the concentration 'Action Level' established by the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act to evaluate corrosion control. When concentration levels exceeding 15 ppb are found within the 90th percentile of samples taken during a monitoring period, the water supply is required to take additional public education and sampling actions. The Action Level is <u>not</u> a health-based standard, and this exceedance is <u>not</u> a violation of the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act.

The City of Royal Oak's 90th percentile value for samples taken during the most recent monitoring period was 23 ppb.

In response to these results, the City of Royal Oak will increase both the frequency of monitoring and the number of sites tested. This additional information will provide important data for state and city officials to determine what additional actions may be required in order to bring the 90th percentile value below 15 ppb in subsequent bi-annual monitoring periods.

Although these results are site-specific and can vary between homes, the City of Royal Oak would like to share some recommended actions that all of our residents can take to reduce exposure to lead, since exposure to lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water and other sources.

Lead can enter drinking water when in contact with older pipes, solder, interior plumbing, and older fittings and fixtures that contain lead, particularly when water has remained still, or stagnated, for extended periods. Homes with lead service lines

have an increased risk of having high lead levels in drinking water. The following tips can help reduce exposure to lead:

• **Run your water before consuming.**
The more time water has been sitting in your home's pipes, the more lead it may contain. Therefore, if your water has not been used for several hours, run the water before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes stagnant water from the pipes. Additional flushing may be required for homes that have been vacant or have a longer service line, however the following provides a good guideline:

- If you **do not** have a lead service line, run cold water for 30 seconds to two minutes, or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature.
- If you **do** have a lead service line, run cold water for at least five minutes to flush water from the plumbing of your home and the lead service line.

• **Consider using a filter to reduce lead in drinking water. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services recommends that any household with a child or pregnant woman use cold water and a certified lead filter to remove lead from their drinking water, especially when preparing baby formula.**
Look for filters that are tested and certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for lead reduction. Be sure to maintain and replace the filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality.

If your household has a child or pregnant woman or if you are not able to afford the cost of a lead filter, the Oakland County Health Department will be at the City's Mahany/Meininger Senior/Community Center at 3500 Marais Avenue on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to provide one lead filter at no cost for those that qualify.

• **Do not use hot water for drinking, cooking, or preparing baby formula.**

• **Boiling will not reduce the amount of lead in water.**

• **Clean your faucet aerator to remove trapped debris.**

• **Check whether your home has a lead service line.**
If you are unsure whether your home is serviced by a lead service line, the following link provides a useful tool to assist you in determining your home's service line material: www.romi.gov/leadtesting.

• **Have your water tested for lead.**
The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) publishes a list of state laboratories that are certified for lead testing at www.michigan.gov/EGLElabs. The Oakland County Health Division also offers testing kits. For more information, contact the Oakland County Health Division at (248) 858-1280.

Health-related questions can be directed to the Oakland County Nurse on Call at (800) 848-5533 or noc@oakgov.com.

In the coming weeks, the City of Royal Oak will be providing additional informational resources as part of a comprehensive public education campaign. Additional information regarding the new regulations and lead safety can be found on the City of Royal Oak's website at: www.romi.gov/leadtesting or on the EGLE website at: www.michigan.gov/MILeadSafe.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.