



TOWN OF STONEHAM
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Public Water Supply
3284000

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Dear Water Customer:

The thirteenth annual report provides detailed information on the MWRA's source water reservoirs and the quality of our water as determined through federal and state testing criteria. Water quality test data, as well as definitions of the terms used in the drinking water industry, are presented in clear and readily understandable language.

As concerns Stoneham's water system, we are fully served by the MWRA. Our water supply is furnished by means of aqueducts from Quabbin Reservoir, a man-made facility approximately 65 miles west of Boston. The reservoir was completed in 1939, encompasses 39 square miles and retains over 400 billion gallons. Six town boundaries and 2,500 persons living in 650 homes were relocated to provide the area that became the Quabbin Reservoir.

Our Town has a network of nearly eighty miles of water main. To maintain its integrity, we have one of the more aggressive water main replacement programs of any MWRA community. During the last year, over 5715 linear feet of water main pipe were replaced. The majority of the pipe being replaced was originally installed in the 1930s and the 1940s. Whereas much of this pipe had significant buildups of iron and mineral deposits, their replacement significantly reduces incidents of discoloration, decreases the likelihood of water main breaks, and provides better fire protection. Other regularly scheduled work which improves water quality includes the replacement of water services, a system wide meter replacement and testing program, and an annual flushing of all water mains throughout the entire Town.

The Town of Stoneham Water Department receives many questions about lead in tap water. The simplest answer is there is no lead in the water supplied to your home. However, lead can enter tap water through contact with brass fixtures (which contain lead in the alloy), lead solder (formerly used in plumbing work), other lead fixtures in the house or possibly through the service line - the pipe running from the house to the water main in the street. Though lead has generally not been used in service lines for over 60 years, there are a small number of lead service lines still in place.

Stoneham is concerned about lead in tap water and tests for lead in fifteen local homes twice a year. The 90th percentile level for Stoneham for the 2010 sampling was 5.06 ppb, which is below the Action Level of 15 ppb. To find out if you might have a lead service line and how it can be replaced, please contact the phone number listed above. For more information about the potential presence of lead in tap water and steps that may be taken to reduce exposure, please see page 5 or contact the Stoneham Board of Health.

In order to ensure the water being provided is safe, seven sites are sampled each week. Testing is performed for coliform, an indicator bacteria, which may signal the presence of more serious bacteria. Should background coliform be noted in any sample, further testing is done to determine the presence of more hazardous organisms. No background coliform was found in any sample during 2010.

Finally, as a further means of ensuring the integrity of our water system, controlling unaccounted for water, and to conform with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection requirements, a complete leak detection survey was performed during 2010. This comprehensive survey is performed annually. Any leaks located are repaired in a timely fashion.

If you would like more information on your town's water, please call Daniel Dragani, Senior Engineer at 781-438-0760.