



December 30, 2024

RE: Public Notice of Violation Regarding Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR)
Failure to Submit an Adequate Inventory for Service Line Materials
Merrimac Waterworks (Water System ID #15700938)

Our water system recently violated a drinking water requirement, and we are required to provide Public Notice (PN) to all our residents and others using our water. This is not an emergency, but as our customers, you have a right to know (1) What happened, (2) What we've done to correct this situation, and (3) What can be done to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water. *Text shown in italics has been provided by EPA for use in Public Notices.*

What Happened? As required by EPA and DNR, during 2023 and 2024, the Village of Merrimac worked to develop an Inventory of materials for every one of our water service lines serving individual customers, with the specific intention of looking for lead. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. This effort included reviewing construction and maintenance records, interviewing staff (past and present), and performing over 120 in-house inspections of water service lines. Consistent with our operators' experience, we found no evidence of lead service lines (LSLs) in our system. The Inventory spreadsheet and other required material were submitted to DNR on time for the October 16, 2024, deadline. Upon DNR's review in late November, they identified five items that DNR felt did not conform to the requirements, and we received a violation notice on December 3rd.

What has been done to correct the Violation? The Village has been able to easily address all five of the violation issues that DNR raised. We have reviewed and corrected our Inventory, identifying service lines where uncertainties exist. On December 17, we issued written notices to the nine households where possible uncertainties exist, and the Inventory materials have been resubmitted to DNR. The Inventory has also been made available for review at Village Hall.

What does this mean? *This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours. Typically, lead enters water supplies by leaching from lead pipes, brass faucets, plumbing with leaded solder, and other plumbing components containing lead. In homes with lead pipes that connect the home to the water main, also known as lead services lines, these pipes are typically the most significant source of lead in the water. Lead pipes are more likely to be found in older cities and homes built before 1986. Service lines made of galvanized iron or steel that are (or were previously) downstream of lead service lines are classified as galvanized requiring replacement (GRR). Identifying and ultimately removing lead and GRR service lines is an important way to protect public health. Among homes without lead service lines, the most common problem is with brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and plumbing with lead solder. In the coming months we will be developing a plan to resolve the uncertainties, which we are required to do in the next 10 years.*

What are the health effects of lead in drinking water? *Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.*



What should I do to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water?

- If you have a water filter, be sure to use it properly. *Using a filter can reduce lead in drinking water. Make sure you use a filter certified to remove lead. Read the directions to learn how to properly install and use your cartridge and when to replace it. Using the cartridge after it has expired can make it less effective at removing lead. Do not run hot water through the filter.*
- *Clean your aerator. Regularly clean your faucet's screen (also known as an aerator). Sediment, debris, and lead particles can collect in your aerator. If lead particles are caught in the aerator, lead can get into your water.*
- *Use cold water. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking and making baby formula. Remember, boiling water does not remove lead from water.*
- *Run your water. The more time water has been sitting in 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, and the length of the lead service line. Residents should contact their water utility for recommendations about flushing times in their community.*
- *Learn if you have a lead service line**. Find out if the pipe that connects your home to the water main (called a service line) is made from lead. Ask your water utility or if your utility doesn't have information a licensed plumber may be able to assist. "Protect Your Tap: A Quick Check for Lead" is EPA's step by step guide to learn how to find lead pipes in your home, which can be found at www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/protect-your-tap-quick-check-lead. [**Note: Merrimac's review during 2023-2024 has not identified any lead service lines.]*
- *Learn about construction in your neighborhood. If you have a lead service line, you should be aware of any nearby construction or maintenance work that could disturb the line. Ground tremors from construction may suddenly cause more lead to be released from lead service lines in the area.*
- *Have your water tested. Contact your water utility to have your water tested and to learn more about the lead levels in your drinking water.*

Conclusion

This notice has been sent to all customers of the Village's water utility and to known apartment-dwellers who do not receive a water bill. Do you know anyone who you believe may not have received this notice? If so, *please share this information 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 about the Inventory, please contact Village Hall at the phone number or address in the footer below.