



Customers inquire about possible parallels between City's and Flint's Water System

Milan Public Works Water System provides answers to consumer questions

The City of Milan Water System continues to consistently meet the challenge and responsibility for providing safe, quality water which meets or exceeds the requirements set forth by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The System proudly serves residential and commercial customers in Milan Michigan.

The City's water, pumped directly from shallow wells, is high-quality and meets or exceeds all water-safety testing requirements. Providing the purest, highest-quality water to our customers is a responsibility that our operators take very seriously.

To sustain consumer confidence in how the City produces and delivers excellent water to its customers that will protect public health, support the economy, protect life and property from the threat of fire and contribute to southeast Michigan's overall quality of life, the City issues an annual Water Quality Report and mails it directly to every customer address. These annual reports are also available on the City's Web site: http://milanmich.org/public_works/Water_Quality_Report_2014.pdf. The 2015 report will be issued before July 2016 as required by Michigan Department of Environmental Quality regulations.

Due to the tragic events in Flint involving its water system, the City of Milan is providing Questions and Answers to many common questions that Milan resident might have about their local system.

Question:

How do I know our water is safe?

Answer:

The City of Milan conducts numerous types of tests and monitoring to ensure safe, high quality water. Monitoring of City water pressure and flow is performed on a continuous basis. Testing is performed on a daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis.

Question:

Does our water have high levels of lead in it like the City of Flint's?

Answer:

No. In the last round of testing, no samples exceeded the action level of 15 parts per billion with the majority of the samples having less than <1 part per billion and the highest single sample having 8.4 parts per billion. Lead and Copper testing is performed every three years with a total of 20 representative samples taken at pre-determined locations thought the City.

Question:

Where does the lead that can be in drinking water come from?

Answer:

The issues with lead in water systems are almost exclusively due to the lead service lines between the street and the house and, in some cases, interior plumbing and fixtures inside the house. So, the Lead and Copper regulations that were enacted in 1992 did take that fact into consideration when corrosion control and testing requirements were established.

The City of Milan's Water System Lead and Copper testing is done at the customer's indoor faucet, so it, in fact, is getting test results that show what may be leaching from the lead service line and as well as indoor plumbing.

Question:

How does the City test for lead?

Answer:

Test protocol requires samples be taken at the customer's faucet after a minimum six-hour stagnation time. Testing requires the customer to take the sample either first thing in the morning or after returning home from work, if the house has been vacant during the day. This way residents can assure that there has been no usage during the six-hour period. The City provides homeowners with training on how to collect the sample and a clean certified sample bottle that they are to use. It identifies the faucet to be used, and provides a sample collection form that residents must complete. The City will then pick up the sample later that day from the customer's home. The City works closely with the customer to assure that the sample was properly collected and ask that they contact water officials with any questions, uncertainty or concerns that the sample may have been improperly collected. The City will take that information and determine if the sample should be discarded and a re-sample scheduled.

The City in coordination with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality carefully selects the homes for sampling to meet the requirements of the Lead and Copper regulation and those that are representative of homes that could be at risk for exposure.

Question:

I understand that some of the trouble in Flint happened in the water service lines between water mains and residences. In Milan, who is responsible for those service lines?

Answer:

The City is responsible for the portion of the service line in the street from the water main to the shut off, or curb stop, generally located near the property line. The homeowner is responsible for the remainder of the service line on private property into the home.

Question:

Given what has happened in Flint, does the City plan to replace these service lines?

Answer:

Although not required to, Milan replaces its portion of lead service lines whenever they leak, break or are exposed by construction projects or if requested by a property owner who is also replacing their portion of the service line.

Question:

How many lead service lines are in the city, and how many service lines are there overall?

Answer:

There are very few lead service lines in the system. The City continues to replace the service lines in coordination with customer replacements, because of City-side leaks/breaks and in connection with construction projects.

Question:

How old are those lead service lines?

Answer:

Lead was discontinued as a service line material around 1930, so that means that most lead services are

85 years old or more.

Question:

If someone is concerned about their water, can they ask/pay to have the water system test it?

Answer:

Before having any testing done, customers may want to consult with the Washtenaw and Monroe County Health Departments to discuss their specific concerns. As with lead in particular, there are other concerns, such as lead-based paint which may be found in older homes. . Homeowners should speak to one of these agencies first to better understand their concerns before getting water tests done.

Washtenaw County Health Department (734) 544-6700, <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>

Monroe County Health Department (734) 240-7800,
http://www.co.monroe.mi.us/government/departments_offices/public_health/index.html

MDEQ Drinking Water Analysis Laboratory, (517) 335-8184, http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3307_4131_4155-10683--,00.html