



**TOWN OF STONEHAM  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

Public Water Supply #  
3284000

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Dear Water Customer:

The Stoneham Public Works Department is pleased to provide this annual newsletter to keep you informed about your water system.

**Our Distribution System:**

The Town of Stoneham purchases all of its water directly from 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 to become the Quabbin Reservoir.

Our Town has a network of nearly eighty miles of water main ranging from 4 inch to 20 inch diameter. To maintain its integrity, Stoneham has one of the more aggressive water main replacement programs of any MWRA community. During the last year, over 4,500 linear feet of water main pipe was replaced. The majority of the pipe being replaced was originally installed in the 1930s and 1940s. Additionally, some pipe from the 1970s was replaced on streets that had experienced several water main breaks. Whereas much of the older pipe had significant buildup of iron and mineral deposits, their replacement significantly reduces 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. A precise GPS location of every fire hydrant in Town was confirmed during 2012. This information was used to produce a master fire hydrant map that is used during emergencies, for flow testing and also for system maintenance and repairs.

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 and MWRA requirements, a complete leak detection survey was performed during 2013. This comprehensive survey is performed annually. Any leaks located are repaired in a timely fashion.

**Lead and Copper Results:**

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 lines - 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 70 years, a small number of lead service lines on private property may still be in place.

In accordance with federal standards, Stoneham tests for lead in tap water in fifteen local homes annually. The 90th percentile level for Stoneham was 3.89 parts per billion (ppb), which is well below the action level of 15 ppb. If you would like to find out if you 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.

**Total Coliform Tests:**

In order to ensure the water being provided is safe, seven sites are sampled and tested for total coliform bacteria each week. Coliform is 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 2013.

Robert Grover, Director of Public Works