



We Are Columbia

CITY OF COLUMBIA

Columbia Water

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Drinking Water Quality Memorandum

TO: School Districts in the Columbia Water Service Area
FROM: Clint Shealy, Assistant City Manager, Columbia Water
SUBJECT: Drinking Water Quality Memorandum
DATE: August 17, 2017

With the 2017-18 school year rapidly approaching, Columbia Water is reaching out to the School Districts in our water service area to provide information about best practices to ensure excellent water quality for your students. When large buildings have been unoccupied for extended periods of time, the water in the internal plumbing may become stagnant and should be flushed to pull fresh water into the building. This is especially important following an extended period such as the summer break.

Occasionally, customers will experience discolored water, which is usually indicative of elevated levels of iron in the water from either distribution pipes or plumbing materials. Although objectionable, this issue is not generally associated with health concerns and is not indicative of elevated levels of lead in the water. If discolored water is noticed, please report this to our Customer Care line at (803) 545-3300. We will dispatch a crew to flush the water lines in the area and also encourage you flush water from the internal plumbing of the facility to clear the discolored water.

The City has also reduced lead exposure risk for its customers by using an effective corrosion control strategy. For over 20 years, we have maintained an excellent record of compliance with lead levels in our drinking water. However, we still recommend property managers take precautions if they believe their structures might contain lead pipes, fittings, or solder, often found in structures built before 1986. Water standing in these pipes can dissolve metals such as lead and copper, increasing potential exposure to consumers. Large buildings like schools may have water standing in pipes for long periods of time. Although our corrosion control treatment strategies are very effective, it is a good practice to flush the tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes prior to using water for drinking or cooking, particularly when the tap has not been used for extended periods of time. This additional measure is recommended to provide the lowest possible risk for lead in drinking water. Additional information about how to minimize exposure to lead in drinking water can be found at the following sites.

- EPA Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water (<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>)
- 3 Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools- (<https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-drinking-water-schools-and-child-care-facilities#3Ts>)

We will be happy to discuss any water quality issues or concerns that you may have. Please contact me at (803) 733-8682 with any questions. Thank you.