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CROSS CONNECTION NEWS

The Cross Connection Crew is appreciative of the customers throughout the District who have been answering and returning the Cross Connection Questionnaire. After looking over those questionnaires, there are some answers that require the crew to do an onsite survey. In September, the crew found a BEAUTIFUL atmospheric vacuum breaker (AVB) set-up. The beauty of this set-up is that the AVBs pictured on the right is disguised in the box on the left. The box protects the valves in case of freezing weather. It blends in so well with landscape, hiding under the rhododendrons.



LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Heceta Water PUD are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes in the District have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/L). Under Federal law, we are required to have a program in place to minimize lead in your drinking water.

This program includes:

1. Corrosion control treatment (treating the water to make it less likely that lead will dissolve into the water);

What does your water company do, besides deliver clean water to your meter?

There is a lot that goes in to making clean water:

Operator on call 24/7 – that’s 8,760 hours a year

Do labs every day, 365 days a year. Results can be seen at Oregon Health Authority (oha.com)

Prepare water tests to be sent to Eugene every other week

Answer calls from customers about everything from terminating service to helping locate water lines

Keep brush and weeds cleared away from the 250 hydrants throughout the District

Read over 2200 meters and print bills six times a year

Install new meters

Attend short schools and classes to be up to date on water technology

Perform safety inspections on fire extinguishers, safety equipment, buildings, vehicles, pump stations and reservoirs every month

Check water levels at all reservoirs every day

Do leak audits at customers’ request

Do water line locates when people call 8-1-1 (Call before you dig!)

Maintain District trucks and other equipment

Some other services provided by the District include a Notary Public during business hours and a CPR/First Aid course

2. Source water treatment (removing lead that is in the water before it leaves our treatment plant); and
3. A public education program.

We are also required to replace the portion of each lead service line that we own if the line contributes lead concentrations of more than 15 ppb after we have completed the comprehensive treatment program. If you have any questions about how we are carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation please give us a call at 541-997-2446.

This newsletter also explains the simple steps you can take to protect yourself by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

Important information about Lead in your Drinking Water

Heceta Water PUD found elevated levels of lead above the action level of 15 PPB in drinking water in some homes. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF LEAD

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the fetus receives lead from the mother’s bones, which may affect brain development.

SOURCES OF LEAD

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the work place and exposure from certain hobbies (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes.) Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children’s metal jewelry.

Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as “lead-free,” may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8 percent lead to be labeled as “lead-free.”

Heceta Water PUD does not have any lead in its source water or water mains in the road. When water is in contact with pipes and plumbing containing lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have lead pipes or lead solder.

EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person’s potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water can receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

Don’t forget about other sources of lead such as lead paint, lead dust, and lead in soil. Wash your children’s hands and toys often as they can

come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN YOUR WATER

- 1. Run your water to flush out lead.** Run water for 15-30 seconds to flush lead from interior plumbing or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking, if it hasn't been used for several hours.
- 2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.
- 3. Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead. Boiling may also increase lead depending on the container used to bring water to a boil.
- 4. Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.** You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality.
- 5. Test your water for lead.** Call us at 541-997-2446 to find out how to get your water tested for lead.
- 6. Get your child's blood tested.** Contact your healthcare provider to find out how to get your child tested for lead, if you are concerned about exposure.
- 7. Identify and replace plumbing fixtures containing lead.** New brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8% lead to be labeled as "lead-free."

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT IS BEING DONE?

Heceta Water PUD is required by law, to test water samples every three years for copper and lead from private homes. These tests have had negligible amounts of copper and lead in the past. However this year, three test sites had elevated lead levels. Two of the sites were from vacation homes that are not used often.

HWPUD is working with Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and sampling every six months until results are below the regulatory limits.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call us at 541-997-2446 or visit our website at www.hwpud.com. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/lead, or contact your health care provider.

Our system information is: Heceta Water People's Utility District, State ID #41-00301.

NEW WATER OPERATOR

Rick Mason joined the staff at the end of September 2019. He grew up in Nebraska and has lived in Michigan and Virginia. Rick now makes Oregon his home. He and his wife moved to Florence 2017. Rick looks forward to being part of the team that provides water and serves the customers in the HWPUD.



Heceta Water PUD
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