

Annual Water Quality Report

This is our 11th annual water report. We are pleased to be reporting the results of our 2008 water quality report. It is our goal to produce the highest quality water for our consumers. We had no water quality violations last year.

If you have any questions about the water system please feel free to contact Michael Towler at the Lee Water Department at 413-243-5526.

Meeting Schedule:

Place: Lee Department of Public Works office

Day: 2nd & 4th Tuesday

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Where Does Our Water Come From?

The water sources used regularly are the Leahey Reservoir, located on the upper reach of the Coddling Brook Watershed and the Schoolhouse Reservoir located in the Washington Mountain Brook Watershed. The Town also has the availability of the Vanetti Reservoir located in the Commons Brook and Coddling Brook Watersheds. The Town of Lee Water Works System serving approximately 5,200 people. The current average water consumption is approximately 729,000 gallons per day. The Leahey Reservoir has a drainage area of about 0.75 square miles with a safe daily yield of .75 million gallons a day. Schoolhouse Lake Reservoir has a safe daily yield of 1.57 million gallons a day and Vanetti reservoir has a safe daily yield of 100,000 gallons a day. The Town of Lee is well positioned to treat up to 2 million gallons a day and it's water supply is abundant. Even with the recent rains, and full reservoirs, water conservation is of the utmost importance.

Each year The Town of Lee conducts water quality testing according to requirements set by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection agency (EPA).

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by the public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water. These tests confirm that your tap water meets all state and federal drinking water quality standards and that your water is safe to drink.

The Lee Water Department recommends the installation of backflow prevention devices, such as low cost hose bib vacuum breaker, for all inside and outside hose connections. You can purchase this at a hardware store or plumbing supply store. This is a great way for you to protect the water in your home as well as the drinking water system in your town! For additional information on cross connections and the status of your water system's cross connection program, please contact Michael Towler Lee Water Department (413) 243-5526

Source Water Assessment and Protection

In 2003 a Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Report was completed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for the Lee reservoirs. The reservoirs were ranked moderate for susceptibility for contamination. The complete SWAP report is available at the Lee DPW office at 45 Railroad Street.

Contaminants that may be present in water includes:

Microbial contaminants-such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

Inorganic contaminants-such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharge, oil and gas production, mining or farming.

Pesticides and herbicides-which may come from a variety of sources such as agricultural, urban storm water runoff.

Organic chemical contaminants-including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive contaminants-which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Disinfectant By-Products-are organic compounds produced when chlorine, a disinfectant used to kill bacteria in the water supply, reacts with naturally occurring organic matter.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants.

The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. Some people maybe more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general populations. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and some infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects you may contact the "EPA/Center for Disease Control and Prevention Guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other Microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791)."

What is a Cross Connection and What Can I do About it?

A Cross-connection is a connection between a drinking water pipe and a polluted source. The pollution can come from your own home. For instance, you're going to spray fertilizer on your lawn. You hook up your hose to the sprayer that contains the fertilizer. If the water pressure drops (say because of fire hydrant use in the town) when the hose is connected to the fertilizer, the fertilizer may be sucked back into the drinking water pipes through the hose. Using an attachment your hose called a back-flow-prevention device can prevent this problem.

Contaminant (Units)	Sites Sampled	AL	90 th Percentile	Sample Date	Exceeding AL	Violation	Possible Source of Contamination
Lead and Copper							
Lead	20	15 PPB	11 PPB	Sept. 2006	1	No	Corrosion of household plumbing system
Copper	20	1.3 PPM	0.057 PPM	Sept. 2006	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing system
• Inorganic Contaminants							
Contaminant (Units)	Level Detected	MCL	MCLG	Sample Date	Violation	Possible Source of Contamination	
Barium	0.012 PPM	2.0 PPM	2.0 PPM	2008	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Nickel	N.D. PPM	None	None	2008	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Nitrate	0.06 PPM	10 PPM	10 PPM	2008	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic, tanks sewage.	
Fluoride	0.07 PPM	4 PPM	4 PPM	2008	No	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories	
Unregulated contaminants							
Sodium	8.6 PPM	None	None	2008	No	By-product of corrosion control, naturally occurring.	
Sulfate	5.0 PPM	None	None	2007	No	Naturally occurring	
Volatile Organic Contaminants							
Total Trihalomethane	44.7 Avg. Range 29.1-68.1 PPB	80 PPB	None	2008	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination	
Total Haloacetic Acid	25.0 Avg. Range 19.6-32.0 PPB	60 PPB	None	2008	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination	
Microbial Contaminants							
Turbidity	0.146 NTU	TT=0.3 NTU	None	2008	No	Soil run off	
Radionuclides							
Radium 226	1.2+/-0.5	5 pCiL	None	2006	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Radium 228	0.4+/-0.7	5 pCiL	None	2006	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Gross AlphaActivity	3.9+/-1.8	15 pCiL	None	2006	No	Erosion of natural deposits	

Definitions:

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is not known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Action Level (AL): the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Treatment Technique (TT): is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water. 0.5 NTU must be met 95% of the time. The TT was met 100% of the time.

90th Percentile Level: out of 10 sites sampled, 9 out of 10 were at or below this level.

Parts per million / (PPM) Parts per billion (PPB)

N.D. non-detect

Lead and Copper: the last round of samplings was done in 2006

Following the passage of the Federal Lead and Copper Rule and initial copper and lead sampling in 1991, the Lee Water Dept. failed to meet the regulated action levels. Notification, bill stuffers, etc. were distributed to comply with regulations until a water treatment facility could be constructed. In 1998, the Lee Water Dept. completed construction of a new water filtration plant. Controlled adjustment in pH and the addition of Zinc Orthophosphate stabilizes the water throughout the distribution system, reducing the aggressive/corrosive action of the water and therefore reducing copper and lead concentrations. I am pleased to report that the Town of Lee is now out of the demonstration phase. Our water is under the action level for lead and copper. Potential adverse health effects for copper and lead are listed as follows:

Copper: Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water-containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal doctor.

Lead: If present elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Lee Water Department is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water is sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.