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April 5, 2016

Joel Beauvais
Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Water
USEPA
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., Mail code 4101M
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Beauvais:

Thank you for your letter of February 29, 2016, inviting my leadership and partnership to strengthen our collective efforts to assure safe drinking water for all Americans.

Oregon has been on the forefront of addressing risks from lead in drinking water for many years. Based on a groundbreaking study of internal plumbing corrosion by the City of Portland, our Public Health Division took two specific actions in 1985 to reduce lead materials in drinking water systems. We worked with the state plumbing code authority to ban the use of lead-based solder in plumbing. We also required Oregon water suppliers to submit a schedule for identifying and removing any lead service pipes, or to certify that no lead service pipes exist. We learned through this effort that some lead service pipes were used in the past in Oregon, and that these were primarily lead "goosenecks" limited to several feet in length that connected the water main to the service line. The City of Portland, for example, identified around 10,000 lead goosenecks, and removed them over a ten-year period.

It has always been our goal to implement the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) as EPA and the Safe Drinking Water Act intended. You asked me to take near-term action in five areas to address risks specifically from lead in drinking water, and I welcome strengthening our mutual commitment to these efforts:

1) **Confirm that the state's protocols and procedures for implementing the LCR are fully consistent with the LCR and applicable EPA guidance**. We use the LCR and available EPA guidance as we understand them to direct our LCR implementation efforts. We appreciate clarifications to these as EPA provides them.

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2) **Use relevant EPA Guidance on LCR sampling protocols and procedures for optimizing corrosion control**. We rely and depend on the EPA guidance, protocols, and procedures in these areas.
3) **Post on our agency's public website all state LCR sampling protocols and guidance for the identification of Tier 1 sites (at which LCR sampling is required to be conducted)**. The relevant EPA guidance and protocols are posted on our agency's public website. www.healthoregon.org/dwp.
4) **Work with public water systems – with a priority emphasis on large systems – to increase transparency in implementing of the LCR by posting on their public website and/or on our agency's website:**
    a. **The materials inventory that systems were required to complete under the LCR, including locations of lead service lines, together with any more updated inventory or map of lead service lines and lead plumbing in the system**. We required systems to submit a materials evaluation summary and certification that they conducted the materials evaluation as required, using EPA forms. The water systems retained their detailed evaluations, but we will notify large systems (those greater than 50,000 population) to encourage them to post their evaluations on their websites.
    b. **LCR compliance sampling results collected by the system, as well as justifications for invalidation of LCR samples**. LCR sampling data summaries for each sampling round are posted on our public-facing website for each water system https://yourwater.oregon.gov/. Sample invalidations are on paper in water system files, but we will begin to post new invalidations on the web pages with LCR sampling data summaries.
5) **Enhance efforts to ensure that residents promptly receive lead sampling results from their homes, together with clear information on health risks and how to abate them, and that the general public receives prompt information on high lead levels in their drinking water systems**. We are currently designing new functionality on our public-facing drinking water webpage to increase transparency for each system that exceeds the lead action level, beginning June 1, 2016. We will display the required steps with EPA-specified dates that they must take under the LCR, and their status on each of those steps. We will display dates of both the notifications of all individual lead results and health risk information, as well as dates for the wider general public education required within 60 days when lead action levels are exceeded.

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> We also recognize the need to conduct renewed outreach to water suppliers on LCR requirements generally, given that many years have passed since initial implementation. We plan to devote our next issue of the PIPELINE drinking water newsletter to this effort, and our staff will focus on LCR requirements at upcoming water supplier training events and stakeholder group meetings.

As the Primacy Agency for safe drinking water in Oregon, we have had considerable success in implementing the EPA Lead and Copper Rule since1992. About 130 Oregon communities implemented corrosion control treatment to successfully reduce lead levels at the tap. Our drinking water program staff are working closely with USEPA Region X to assure that we are fully engaged with those water suppliers that have exceeded lead action levels in recent years, and with their water users.

I appreciate your effort to reach out to us as the Primacy Agency, and I welcome the opportunity to work closely with USEPA to assure that water users are protected from lead at the tap.

Sincerely,

Lynne Saxton
Director

CC: Peter Grevatt
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