

November 15, 2024

Re: St. Johnsbury Water Department  
Service Line Material - Unknown

Dear Water Customer,

The Town of St. Johnsbury is working with Dufresne Group to identify water services that are part of the St. Johnsbury Water System that contain lead pipe. Based on the information gathered to date, the water service material at your address has been identified as unknown.

### **Why are you receiving this letter?**

Lead can cause serious health and developmental problems, especially in developing fetuses and young children. If your home service line contains lead, you are at an increased risk of lead exposure. This letter serves to notify you of this risk and provide information to help you reduce the risk of lead exposure.

**Even if you responded to previous letters and reported the service line material in your house or had an inspection done, if the Town-owned portion of the service line is still an unknown material, the water system is required to provide you with this notice annually until the material of the entire length of the service is known.**

### **What can I do to reduce my risk?**

Review the enclosed flier for steps you can take to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water. In addition to your service line, other plumbing in your home may contain lead and could increase the levels of lead in your drinking water. These may include faucets, valves, and soldered joints. It is recommended that homeowners contact a licensed plumber and have a plumbing assessment done to determine if your in-home plumbing is a source of lead in your drinking water.

If you have questions, would like to report what your service line material is, or schedule an inspection to determine your service line material, (if you have not done so already), please contact Dufresne Group at (802) 748-8605 or [servicelineinventory@dufresnegroup.com](mailto:servicelineinventory@dufresnegroup.com). This inspection is at no cost to the property owner.

### **More information**

For more information on reducing lead exposure and the health effects of lead, visit the U.S. EPA website [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead), call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-5323, or speak with your health care provider.

For information about your water system's Service Line Inventory and Lead Service Line Replacement Plan, please see the Town of St. Johnsbury website at [www.StJVT.com](http://www.StJVT.com).

## **Health Effects of Lead**

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in intelligence and attention span. Lead exposure can cause new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of pregnant people who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney, or nervous system problems.

### **Sources of Lead**

Lead is rarely found in a water system's surface or groundwater source but may enter drinking water if plumbing materials, such as solder or fixtures, including some made of chrome or brass, contain lead and corrode. Homes built before 1990 are more likely to have plumbing, solder, and fixtures that contain lead. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 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.

# Important Information About Your Drinking Water Service Line

The St. Johnsbury water system has determined your house, or building receives drinking water from an **unknown material service line**. Although there is no confirmation of having a lead service line, lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant people and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water and share this information with anyone who drinks and/or cooks using water at this property.

## What is a service line?

A service line is the pipe connecting the water main to the interior plumbing in a building. The service line may be wholly owned by the water system or property owner, or ownership may be split between the water system and the property owner.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has

developed a step-by-step guide to help people identify lead pipes in their homes.

“Protect Your Tap: A Quick Check for Lead” is available online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/protect-your-tap-quick-check-lead>.



## Replace your building's service line.

If a property owner replaces their portion of the lead service line, then the water system is required to replace the system-owned portion of the lead service line when notified by the property owner of the replacement.

Contact the Dufresne Group at (802) 748-8605 or [servicelineinventory@dufresnegroup.com](mailto:servicelineinventory@dufresnegroup.com) about:

- Opportunities to verify the material of a lead status unknown service line, such as scheduling a service line visual inspection.
- Opportunities to replace lead service lines and galvanized requiring replacement lines.
- Notifying the water system that you are replacing your portion of a service line.

## Steps You Can Take to Reduce Your Exposure to Lead in Your Drinking Water

- Run your water to flush out lead. Run water for 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking.
- Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Lead dissolves more easily in hot water.
- Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- Look for alternative sources or water treatment. You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration set a limit for lead in bottled water of 5 parts per billion. Not all water filters remove lead. Check the product for independent testing from a group such as NSF International (NSF.org, 800-673-8010) that verifies the specific filter model removes lead.
- Use your filter properly. Using a filter can reduce lead in drinking water. If you use a filter, it should be certified to remove lead. Read any directions provided with the filter to learn how to properly install, maintain, and use your cartridge and when to replace it. Using the cartridge after it has expired can make it less effective at removing lead. Do not run hot water through the filter. For more information on facts and advice on home water filtration systems, visit EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/consumer-tool-identifying-point-use-and-pitcher-filters-certified-reduce-lead>.
- Clean your aerator. Regularly remove and clean your faucet's screen (also known as an aerator). Sediment, debris, and lead particles can collect in your aerator. If lead particles are caught in the aerator, lead can get into your water.
- Test your water for lead. Contact Dufresne Group at (802) 748-8605 or [servicelineinventory@dufresnegroup.com](mailto:servicelineinventory@dufresnegroup.com) to find out how to get your water tested for lead by a certified laboratory. Results may differ between first-draw water and water collected after the tap has been flushed.
- Identify and replace plumbing fixtures that contain lead. Over the last few decades, several state and federal laws have reduced the amount of lead allowed in plumbing solder and fixtures.

### Get your children tested to determine lead levels in their blood

The material of your service line has not been identified yet. However, if you are concerned about potential lead exposure, you may wish to speak with a healthcare provider to see if your children's blood lead level is elevated and/or if there is a need for blood testing. The Vermont Department of Health also provides information about how you can have your children's blood tested for lead. Please visit <https://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/healthy-homes/lead-hazards-and-lead-poisoning> for information on these actions.