



CHRISTOPHER EVELETH

MAYOR

Christopher.Eveleth@ci.owosso.mi.us

(989)725-0595

301 W. MAIN • OWOSSO, MICHIGAN 48867-2958 • (989) 725-0599 • FAX (989) 723-8854

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An open letter to Owosso citizens and consumers of Owosso's water

Attached you will find a “public health advisory” regarding Owosso’s water, which is being mandated by the State of Michigan.

It’s important that you bear in mind several key points regarding this advisory:

- “Owosso water” does not contain lead. Owosso performs routine testing of our source water and of the water leaving the plant, and neither of these samples contain lead. The test result which led to this advisory is indicative of the lead level at a particular address, not in “Owosso water” in general.
- Owosso does not have lead water mains. The water leaving the plant and making its way to your home stays lead free as a result, but it’s important to note that the City treats our water as though there are lead water mains in order to protect water from a homes service lines and copper plumbing in older houses.
- Any trace amounts of lead that might be found in the water in your home are due to the “service line” from the city water main into the house, or the plumbing (if your home was built before 1988). While the service line is technically owned by the property owner, the City of Owosso will be spending the next several years replacing lead and galvanized service lines at no direct cost to the homeowner. Owosso will continue to do so in until there are none left within the city.
- This public health advisory does not come as a result of a change in Owosso’s water quality. This is a result of mandated changes in the way the cities across Michigan conduct their testing and report results and is again indicative of a testing sample from one particular home.
- For decades, the “action level” for lead in water was 50 parts per billion, and more recently is set at 15 parts per billion (changing to 12 ppb in the next 5 years). The reading which has triggered this advisory was 21 ppb, less than half of the previous action level.
- Owosso is not alone in having to issue this advisory for the first time. There are more than 15 communities around the state having to issue this same advisory.

Naturally, the preferred level for every home in Owosso is 0 parts per billion. The City of Owosso will be doing our part to achieve that goal in replacing lead and galvanized service lines, and over the coming months the Owosso City Council will partner with staff to consider potential solutions.

If you are concerned that your service line or plumbing fixtures may cause elevated lead levels in your water, you are encouraged to email the City of Owosso at safewater@ci.owosso.mi.us for further information and resources.

Thank you,

Christopher T. Eveleth
Mayor, City of Owosso