



Kevin O'Connor
SUEZ New Jersey
60 Devoe Place
Hackensack, NJ 07601

January 16, 2019

Dear Clerk:

As reported to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, SUEZ has found elevated levels of lead in the drinking water in a limited number of homes in Bergen and Hudson counties during a water quality testing program. While 16 of the 108 homes tested above the government standard, we want you to know that we are taking this seriously. In fact, the quality of our water is so important to us that we perform nearly 50,000 tests each year in this system alone.

I want to assure you that the water leaving our plant has no detectable level of lead. In addition, we have no lead water mains in our service territory.

The likely source of lead in drinking water is from the service lines that extend from the water mains to the homes and businesses and from lead fixtures in customer homes. The lead service lines owned by the utility represent approximately 5 percent of our system. We also know that 15 percent of our system has what are known as lead goosenecks. These are short pieces of flexible piping that connect a water main to a service line.

To prevent lead from leaching into the water, we utilize a corrosion control program that has been successfully in place for decades.

The ultimate goal is to remove all lead in the system. In addition to corrosion control, every time that we are doing work in the ground and we see lead, we remove it. We are now expanding that program to more specifically target lead service line replacements in our system.

Since it will take time to test our corrosion control and remove lead lines, we are making an extra effort to provide important information to our customers and help in any way we can:

- Customers can visit www.mysuezwater.com to find out if they may be served by a lead service line.
- We are providing free **water quality testing** to any customer served by a utility-owned lead service line.
- A water **filter** will be provided to any customer whose test results are above the government standard.
- We are notifying every customer in our system directly by letter.
- We've set up a new water quality website - SUEZWQ.com – which will provide customers with the information that they need.
- And our customer call center representatives are available to answer customer questions or concerns.

We are taking concrete steps to help our customers, but this is not something we can do alone. We believe that



our partners in government can also take material actions to help limit lead exposure.

- For example, at the local level, if we were informed whenever roadwork was conducted in the ground in our service territory, we would be better able to coordinate our lead service line replacement with towns.
- At the state level, we encourage the expansion of existing infrastructure programs or a program that would provide low-cost loans for customers so they can replace their portion of the service line.
- At the federal level, we believe the EPA should require homeowners to certify whether or not they have lead plumbing in their homes at the time of sale. We already have something for paint. We need this for water.

I want to reassure you that our top priority is always to provide safe drinking water to our customers. We will continue to provide you and our customers all available information as well as continue to address this issue rigorously.

In addition to our existing customer service phone number, we have set up a service line and e-mail box for all elected and appointed officials to call if you have any questions or wish to discuss this further. If so, please contact us at 201-525-2338 or at waterqualityNJ@suez.com.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Kevin P O'Connor

Kevin O'Connor
Director, External Affairs