



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

SEP 12 2008

OFFICE OF  
WATER

Ralph Scott  
Community Projects Director  
Alliance for Healthy Homes  
50 F Street, NW, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Scott:

Thank you for your letter of August 1, 2008, to Benjamin Grumbles, Assistant Administrator for Water, Steve Heare, and Jeffrey Kempic, in which you expressed concerns about directions that the DC Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) is providing to customers engaged in their compliance monitoring program for the Lead and Copper Rule. Like you, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has an active interest in ensuring that public water systems are meeting regulatory requirements.

The purpose of the monitoring protocol is to determine if corrosion control is effective in reducing lead and copper leaching at times and locations where we would expect levels to be greatest under normal conditions. Therefore, we believe that homeowners collecting samples should use their water as they would normally, with the exception that the regulations require the water to stagnate for a minimum of six hours prior to collection of the sample.

We do not understand why DC WASA believes it should be necessary to request flushing only in households participating in the sampling. While this may fall within a strict legal interpretation of the regulations, we believe that it goes against the intent of the monitoring protocol, since it changes the normal water use of the homeowners in the sample. We will discuss this matter with their water quality manager to determine if there is a rationale that we should consider as we evaluate this issue. We also want to make sure that you are aware that we are considering additional actions we can take to further reduce lead and copper in drinking water and will be holding a stakeholder meeting on October 14-15 to initiate the effort.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. However, we hope that this new issue does not deflect from the importance of addressing more serious sources of lead in housing that your association has highlighted in the past. The nation has a goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning by 2010 and, while our program is focused on reducing exposure from drinking water, it is critical for us to not lose sight of the importance of directing resources and attention at more serious sources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cynthia C. Dougherty".

Cynthia C. Dougherty, Director  
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water