



## Village of Wheeling Water Quality

The recent water crisis in Flint, Michigan has led many people—nationwide and here in Wheeling—to wonder whether their own water is free from lead contamination and safe to drink. The information below is meant to help answer this and other questions about the Village's water supply.

### **Where does our water come from?**

Wheeling's water comes from Lake Michigan, and is sent to Wheeling from the Evanston Water Treatment Plant by way of the Northwest Water Commission Pumping Station. After it arrives in Wheeling, it is sent from a receiving station into water mains: large pipes that run throughout the community. Privately-owned service lines bring water from the mains into homes and businesses. The Village is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the receiving stations and the water mains; service lines are maintained by property owners.

### **How is the water treated?**

The Evanston Water Treatment Plant extensively filters, chemically treats, and tests water to make sure that it is free of contaminants before transmitting it to users. When water arrives at the Village's receiving station it is tested again and given additional treatment if necessary. In order to keep the water safe during transmission, Evanston adds blended phosphate as part of the treatment process; this harmless chemical coats the insides of pipes and prevents water from coming into direct contact with metal.

### **Is there lead in the water anywhere in the system?**

Lead does not occur naturally in the water that the system draws from Lake Michigan. Also, regular testing confirms that lead is not being introduced into drinking water during its transmission to residents and businesses through the water system.

Lead may, however, enter your water supply from the private service line that connects to the water main. If you occupy an older home or building, then you may have a lead service line. Please note that even lead service lines are generally safe due to the layer of blended phosphate that coats their interiors. (The primary cause of the Flint water crisis was not lead pipes, but the fact that corrosive chemicals drawn into the system from the Flint River dissolved the protective coating inside these pipes.) The primary danger of lead exposure in structures built prior to 1978 actually comes from lead paint, not from lead pipes.



If you have questions about drinking water quality, or about testing your water for lead, please contact the Village of Wheeling Department of Public Works at 847-279-6900.