

CITY OF PEABODY

24 LOWELL STREET
PEABODY, MA 01960



P. 978-538-5700
F. 978-538-5980

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR EDWARD A. BETTENCOURT, JR.

December 13, 2013

Dear Peabody Resident,

Enclosed you will find a Public Notice explaining revisions to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) drinking water standards and how they affect the City of Peabody. These revisions, which took effect in 2012, mandate more rigorous testing for disinfection byproducts, substances that can form when water is treated with chlorine, as Peabody's drinking water currently is.

Recently, water taken from several sampling locations around the City was found to contain levels of disinfection byproducts that exceeded the EPA standard according to the revised water sampling guidelines. **The DEP has notified us that this is not an emergency and that there is no imminent health risk to our community.** The quality of our water has not changed - rather the analytical method used to measure certain disinfection byproducts has changed.

In October 2012, I was made aware of the issues facing our City's water system and the imminent deadline to meet the revised EPA standards. I immediately reached out to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Public Health. Since then, we have implemented a number of short and long-term solutions that have already put us on the road to the reduction of disinfection byproducts formation and compliance. The most important step we have taken is to upgrade our water treatment facilities, by changing our method of secondary disinfection from a chlorine system to a chloramination system. This \$1 million dollar project is nearing completion, and we expect that the new chloramination disinfection system will be on-line in January, 2014. The City has prepared a Question and Answer pamphlet that will give you more information about what this change means to you; you can find that document at City Hall or online at http://www.peabody-ma.gov/health/68737%20Peabody_Drinking_Water.pdf.

- **For most regular uses of the City's water, chloraminated water is the same as chlorinated water. However, there are two groups that need to pay particular attention to this changeover:**
 - **Kidney dialysis patients may need to take special care with chloraminated water. Chloramines must be removed from the water used in some dialysis processes.**
 - **Owners of fish tanks, reptiles, amphibians, Koi, and crustaceans must take action to remove chloramines from water used in live fish and crustacean tanks.**

Ensuring the safety of our drinking water is one of the most important responsibilities of municipal government and one that I take very seriously. The solutions we have launched are just the first in a series of actions we will take to further safeguard Peabody's water. Please take a few moments to read the enclosed Public Notice. We will continue to provide similar Public Notices on a quarterly basis. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact my office at 978-538-5700.

Please know that I am committed to doing whatever it takes to see that Peabody meets the EPA's testing requirements and continues to provide its residents with safe, healthy drinking water.

Warmest regards,

Edward A. Bettencourt, Jr.
Mayor, City of Peabody