# Press Release Template

**Provided To**: Major daily and weekly newspaper(s), television, and radio stations with the largest audiences that serve the community served by the water system. Please note, media outlets may not include all of the information you provide in your press release.

**Waiver**: If your system serves a population less than 3,300, or if there is no media outlet that reaches the population served by your system, this requirement can be waived. If the press release requirement is waived, your system must then distribute the following notice to every household served by the system. This notice contains additional information that is not in the brochure.

If you create your own press release or notice, you must include the language shown in italics. You must cover the topics explained in non-italicized text, but you can change the language. Fill in the areas highlighted in gray, in brackets, prior to prior to distribution.

**PRESS RELEASE / DRINKING WATER NOTICE**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN [INSERT NAME OF YOUR COMMUNITY] DRINKING WATER**

[Insert name of water system/community] found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water. The main way to come in contact with lead in Minnesota is through lead-based paint in homes built before 1978. You can also come in contact with lead through drinking water. Lead can get in your drinking water as it passes through your household plumbing system.

**Health Effects of Lead**

[Insert name of water system/community] is concerned about the health of their residents because lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother’s bones, which may affect brain development.

[Insert a quote from a water system official letting the public know what actions the system is taking to address the lead action level exceedance or insert a list of action steps. This could include an explanation for why lead levels are elevated, if this is known. You may wish to include information about the exceedance and the history of lead levels in tap water samples in your community. For example, have they declined substantially over time? Have they been low and risen recently? Explain the steps being taken to reduce lead levels, such as corrosion control treatment and/or lead service line replacement].

**How Can I Reduce My Exposure to Lead in Water?**

* **Let the water run** before using it for drinking or cooking. If you have a lead service line, let the water run for 3-5 minutes. If you do not have a lead service line, let the water run for 30-60 seconds. The more time water has been sitting in your home’s pipes, the more lead it may contain.
* **Use cold water** for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula. Hot water absorbs more lead from pipes than cold water.
* **Boiling water does not reduce lead levels** and may actually increase them.
* **Test your water**. The only way to know if lead has been reduced by letting it run is to check with a test. If letting the water run does not reduce lead, consider other options to reduce your exposure. Many laboratories can test your water to see if it contains lead.
  + [If your water system offers testing, include your contact information and anything else, such as if you provide free testing. You could also refer to other labs in your area that are certified to do water testing for lead.]
  + Contact a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) accredited laboratory to purchase a sample container and get instructions on how to submit a sample at [Search for Accredited Laboratories (https://eldo.web.health.state.mn.us/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam)](https://eldo.web.health.state.mn.us/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam). MDH can help you understand your test results.
* **Treat your water** or find an alternative source if a test shows your water has high levels of lead after you let the water run: [Home Water Treatment Fact Sheet (https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html)).
* **Get your child tested**. Contact your local health department or doctor to find out how you can get your child tested for lead if you are concerned about exposure. Find out more information about child lead poisoning prevention with [Childhood lead exposures (https:/data.web.health.state.mn.us/web/mndata/lead)](https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/web/mndata/lead).

Call us at [insert phone number for your water system] or visit our website at [insert website address]. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit [Lead (http://www.epa.gov/lead)](http://www.epa.gov/lead)) or contact your doctor.

This notice is brought to you by [insert name of water system/community]. State Water System ID\_\_\_.

Date distributed: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_