

Safe Water in the Town of Valdese, NC

I am writing to you, the citizens of Valdese, just to ensure you that you have safe drinking water. I know with all of the things that you are seeing about the lead in the drinking water in Flint, Michigan that you must be wondering about the quality of your own drinking water. Just let me assure you that we take extra measures to make certain that the citizens of Valdese are receiving the best quality of water possible. We are a state governed facility, and we have to meet some very stringent water quality parameters. We run over 11,000 tests on your water every year and these include tests pertaining to the lead levels in your drinking water. The Town of Valdese is required by law to put out a Customer Compliance Report (CCR) every year that tells you everything that we check for in your drinking water during that past year. If we have any current drinking water violations, then they must be included in this CCR. Since serving as your Valdese Water Plant Superintendent, I am very proud to inform you, the citizens of Valdese, that we have not had to report any water violations whatsoever including any bad lead test results. You may pick up a copy of your CCR at our Town Hall Offices or find it @ http://townofvaldese.com/media/uploads/2015_ccr.pdf.

However, the main point of this letter to you is to help answer your concerns about lead in your drinking water and to assure you that your water is safe to drink. Lead in drinking water is primarily introduced by materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Town of Valdese is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. So please, always use lead free components in your plumbing!! The Town of Valdese does, however, have several treatment techniques that ensure that you will never have the problems with your drinking water that the residents of Flint, Michigan are experiencing.

First, we feed phosphate which protects our service lines from corroding, then leeching, and eventually contaminating your drinking water. To ensure that we are feeding enough phosphate to coat your water lines, we take weekly grab samples to see if there is a residual of phosphate left in the line. If there is a residual, then we are feeding enough phosphate to ensure the coating of your lines. This coating keeps lead, copper, and whatever else from corroding and contaminating your water. I tested the levels of phosphate in our system today and we had a residual of .5 ppm. Our pipes are well coated.

We also maintain a slightly basic pH around 7.5 to ensure that there is no unwanted corrosion in the system. When metals and water come together then you know that there are reactions and these reactions can cause the pipes to become corroded, and allow things like lead to leech out into your water. By keeping the pH at 7.5 or slightly above, then we can control this corrosion and keep these things from reacting, making sure that your water does not become contaminated.

Finally, the fresher the water, the less chance you have for this corrosion to take place. The water plant is required by law to take chlorine residuals at the points farthest away from the plant on a daily basis. This ensures that the water at the end of the system stays fresh and in turn reduces any corrosion. We also have a flushing program that is complaint driven. If there are any water complaints then the Valdese Public Works Department immediately flush the lines in that neighborhood.

The employees of the Town of Valdese and at the Valdese Water Plant do everything we can to ensure that we provide you with the best services and the best water that we possibly can. We don't want you to worry if your trash is picked up, or if your water is safe to drink, or even if you are personally kept safe. We want you to enjoy the benefits of being a citizen of Valdese, NC. We don't want you to ever go to your sink to turn on the water and have worries about if the water is coming out, or if it does, is it bad for me. We are here to ensure that you get to always take your services and water for granted!!

Sincerely,

Jerry Conley
Water Plant Superintendent
Valdese, NC