

# 2021

## Drinking Water Quality Report





## Introduction

The employees of Stoughton Utilities are pleased to provide you with this year’s annual Drinking Water Quality Report. We regularly monitor Stoughton’s drinking water for contaminants to ensure that it meets all health and safety standards. The purpose of this report is to inform our customers of the findings from our ongoing water quality monitoring. We want you to understand the efforts we make continuously to improve water quality and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your drinking water remains at the highest possible level.

If you would like to know more about the information in this report, please contact Stoughton Utilities Customer Service at (608) 873-3379, or email us at [customerservice@stoughtonutilities.com](mailto:customerservice@stoughtonutilities.com).

## About Stoughton Utilities

Stoughton Utilities’ water comes from four wells located throughout the city and is pumped directly into the water distribution system and three storage facilities. The water is treated with chlorine and fluoride as it leaves the wells. In 2021, Stoughton Utilities pumped a total of 482,686,000 gallons of water.

Stoughton Utilities is nonprofit and is owned directly by the City of Stoughton. All operations are funded entirely by the water, electric, and wastewater rates paid for our services by customers. In lieu of taxes for 2021, Stoughton Utilities paid \$883,261 to the City of Stoughton, making it the largest taxpayer in the city.

Sources of Water			
Source ID	Source	Depth (in Feet)	Status
Well No. 4	Groundwater	969	Active
Well No. 5	Groundwater	1,113	Active
Well No. 6	Groundwater	1,137	Active
Well No. 7	Groundwater	1,040	Active

## Educational Information

The sources of drinking water - whether it is obtained from the tap or store bought - include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals, sometimes containing radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals and from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which shall provide the same protection for public health.

### Did you know?

The average family of four in Dane County pays

**\$43.14\***  
per month for water

The average Stoughton family of four pays only

**\$38.55\***  
per month for water

*\*Figures based on information from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission.  
Average monthly water usage for a family of four is 8,000 gallons.*

## Water Conservation

Save water (and money!) with these easy water conservation tips.

- Install a water-saving showerhead. They use one-third to one-half the water that regular showerheads use.
- Install faucet aerators, which will reduce the amount of water released when you turn on the tap.
- Listen for running toilets. A running toilet can waste as much as 4,000 gallons per day! You can also check to see if your toilet is running by placing a few drops of food coloring in the tank of the toilet. If the water in the bowl starts to change color after a few minutes, you have a leak.
- Repair leaky water faucets. Thirty drops of water a minute can waste as much as 50 gallons of water per month.
- Take short showers. They use less water than a bath!



## Water Main Breaks

Every year, our water operators repair several water main breaks throughout the city. A water main break can be identified by unexplained water coming up out of the ground or road. Water mains can break from damage during construction, older materials that weaken and deteriorate over time, and stress on the pipes from fluctuations in temperature. We tend to see more water main breaks in the winter when the ground starts to freeze and in the spring when the ground starts to thaw.

If you notice any unexplained water seeping up out of the ground or pavement, please let us know. The sooner we are able to fix a water main break, the less water is wasted!



## Stoughton's Water Towers

Water towers are a vital part of Stoughton's water distribution system. Most people know that water towers store water for the community, but the towers also provide the pressure that brings that water into our homes and businesses.

Stoughton has two water towers providing a combined 900,000 gallons of water storage. Water is pumped from Stoughton Utilities' four wells into these water towers where it is stored until you turn on a faucet or flush a toilet. The pressure from the water in these elevated water towers helps push the water through the distribution system and into your home.

Water towers also help to ensure that there is enough water and water pressure to fire hydrants when firefighters need large amounts of water quickly. Also, since we don't rely solely on pumps to send water through the distribution system, you will still have water pressure during power outages.

## Conserve Water by Finding and Fixing Leaks

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the average household can waste nearly 10,000 gallons of water per year due to water leaks.

Save water and money by finding and fixing water leaks throughout your home or business. Check for running toilets, dripping faucets, and leaking outside hose bibs. Water softeners can also waste water if they are not operating correctly.

## What Causes Rusty Water?

Customers occasionally ask us, “what causes dirty or rusty water, and is it safe to drink?” Rusty water may look and taste unpleasant, and possibly stain sinks and clothing, but it is not a health concern.

Rust is oxidized iron and is introduced to tap water from the corrosion of the water mains under the street and/or the plumbing inside your home, apartment, or business. Tap water can turn brown, red, orange, or yellow due to the iron particles that break free from corroded iron or steel pipes.

Rust and sediment is always present in water mains, and regularly mixes with drinking water in microscopic amounts. Certain events can stir up the sediment in the water mains, causing discoloration as the particulates become visible to the naked eye, including water main breaks, water main replacement during construction projects, vehicular accidents involving a fire hydrant, fire fighting efforts with high water use, or other disturbances that cause a significant change in water flow.

Stoughton Utilities flushes our 71 miles of water mains at least once per year, which allows us to not only remove sediment that has accumulated in the mains, but to also verify the proper operation of hydrants and valves and maintain firefighting capabilities. Although this flushing is essential to provide high water quality and prevent long-term sedimentation and discoloration issues, it can cause short-term discoloration as the sediment is disturbed due to the higher water flows.

When sediment gets stirred up in the water system, the resulting discoloration will typically last approximately 2-4 hours or less. After this time, the sediment will settle back out and the water will become clear. You can speed up the process by turning on the cold water tap at full pressure nearest where the water enters your home, such as a basement laundry tub or a first-floor sink, and allowing the water to run until it is clear. During these periods, it is important to try to avoid using hot water as the sediment can be drawn into your hot water heater's water tank, which could require you to have to flush the tank later.



## Drinking Water FAQ's

**What is the hardness of Stoughton's water?**

Stoughton's water is 18.0 grains of hardness.

**What is the PH level of Stoughton's water?**

The PH level of the water supply ranges from 7.4 – 8.5.

**How much iron is in Stoughton's water?**

The average iron content in our water supply is 0.17 parts per million (ppm). This amount will vary between 0.00 ppm and 0.26 ppm based on your location within the city.

**What is added to Stoughton's water?**

Stoughton Utilities disinfects our water with chlorine, which is a step in the water treatment and distribution process to ensure the biological safety of water. We add different amounts of chlorine throughout the year to help combat possible contaminants that may become problematic in water with elevated temperatures.

Stoughton Utilities fluoridates the water that leaves our wells. Fluoridated water keeps teeth strong and reduces cavities by about 25% in children and adults. Community water fluoridation is recommended by nearly all public health, medical, and dental organizations. It is recommended by the American Dental Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Public Health Service, and World Health Organization.

**Can Stoughton Utilities test my home's water for contaminants?**

Stoughton Utilities does not offer personal water testing services. To have the water tested at your home, please contact a certified laboratory to request a test kit. Options include:

**Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene**

(800) 442-4618

**Northern Lake Service, Inc**

(715) 478-2777

## Water System Overview

2 Water Towers

4 Wells

71 Miles of Water Main

698 Fire Hydrants

5,194 Water Meters

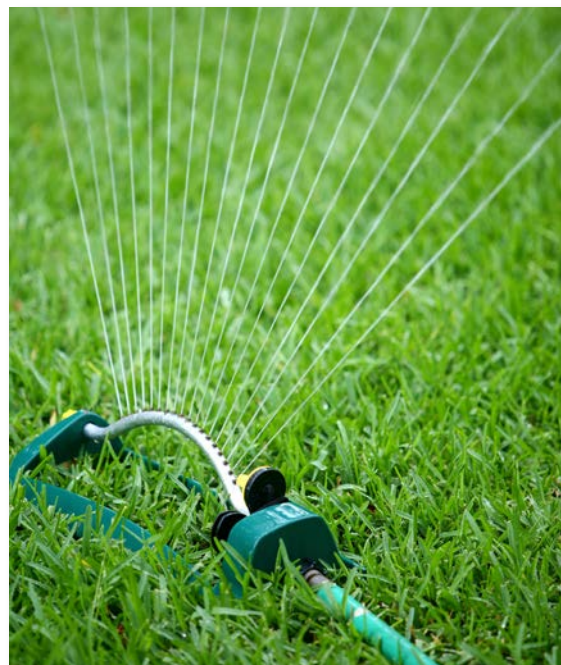
1.3 Million Gallons of Storage



## Outdoor Water Use



When using water outdoors for watering lawns and gardens or refilling your pool, please keep in mind that Stoughton Utilities does not offer sewer or wastewater billing credits unless you have already installed a secondary “water-only” meter to measure the usage that goes only to your outside faucets.

To have a water-only meter, you will first need to work with a plumber to complete in-house piping revisions to create a separate water line to your outside faucets and/or sprinkler system. Once that is complete, Stoughton Utilities will install a second meter in your home. Your primary meter will measure all water consumed inside the home, and standard wastewater charges will apply to its measured usage. The second meter will only measure water consumed outside the home, and wastewater charges will not apply since it's known that this water is not going down the drain. Water-only meters must remain in place throughout the year, and must be installed for a minimum of 12-months.



In addition to your plumbing costs, Stoughton Utilities charges a one-time installation fee of \$40.00 to set and activate the second meter. After that, there is a \$10.15 monthly charge that is in addition to your current monthly charges, and any metered usage is billed at \$3.55 per every 1,000 gallons of water used.

You should consume at least 25,000 gallons of water annually through your outside faucets and/or sprinkler systems in order to offset the additional monthly charges, and therefore benefit from a water-only meter.

Tap Water	Vs.	Bottled Water
		
<p><b>\$0.00055</b> 20 oz. tap water</p>	<p><b>\$1.50</b> 20 oz. bottled water</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</li> <li>• Strict testing requirements</li> <li>• No plastic bottle waste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overseen by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)</li> <li>• Less strict testing requirements</li> <li>• 80% of plastic bottles end up in landfills</li> </ul>	

### Information From the EPA

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's safe drinking water hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) are the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink two liters of water every day at MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons, such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, persons with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.



## Water Quality Testing and Results

Stoughton Utilities routinely monitors for constituents in your drinking water in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. All sources of drinking water, including bottled water, are subject to potential contamination by constituents that are naturally occurring or are man-made. Those constituents can be microbes, organic or inorganic chemicals, or radioactive materials.

The following Table A. shows the results of our monitoring for the period from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 (unless otherwise noted). Please note that only water parameters that had a detect are listed. If you would like to see the other constituents that were tested for but did not have any detects, please contact us.

**Table A.**

Contaminant (units)	MCL	MCLG	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2021)	Typical Source of Contamination
<b>Disinfection Byproducts</b>						
HAA5 (site 19) (ppb)	60	60	3	3		By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM (site 19)(ppb)	80	0	11.9	11.9		By-product of drinking water chlorination
HAA5 (site 20)(ppb)	60	60	3	3		By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM (site 20)(ppb)	80	0	33.7	33.7		By-product of drinking water chlorination
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>						
Arsenic (ppb)	10	n/a	0	0-0	3/4/2020	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Barium (ppm)	2	2	0.048	0.019 - 0.048	3/4/2020	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chromium (ppb)	100	100	2	0 - 2	3/4/2020	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.8	0.5 - 0.8	3/4/2020	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nickel (ppb)	100		0.9100	0.0000 - 0.9100	3/4/2020	Nickel occurs naturally in soils, ground water and surface waters and is often used in electroplating, stainless steel and alloy products.
Nitrate (NO3-N) (ppm)	10	10	4.45	0.00 - 4.7		Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	n/a	n/a	21.00	3.30 - 21.00	3/4/2020	n/a
<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>						
Gross Alpha, Excl. R & U (pCi/l)	15	0	7.7	0.5 - 7.7	3/4/2020	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium, (226 + 228) (pCi/l)	5	0	3.7	0.0 - 3.7	3/4/2020	Erosion of natural deposits
Gross Alpha, Incl. R & U (n/a)	n/a	n/a	8.1	0.0 - 8.1	3/4/2020	Erosion of natural deposits
Combined Uranium (ug/l)	30	0	0.8	0.4 - 0.8	3/4/2020	Erosion of natural deposits

## Definitions

**AL** - Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**HAL** - Health Advisory Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, poses a health risk and may require a system to post a public notice.

**MCL** - Maximum Contaminant Level: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**MCLG** - Maximum Contaminant Level Goal: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.



## Unregulated Contaminants

Unregulated contaminants are those for which the EPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist the EPA in determining the occurrence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted. The EPA requires us to participate in this monitoring. A summary of these contaminants is shown in Table B. Table C. shows the individual results of this testing. Only contaminants that were detected are shown.

**Table B.**

Contaminant (units)	MCL	MCLG	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2021)	Typical Source of Contamination
<b>Unregulated Contaminants</b>						
Sulfate (ppm)	n/a	n/a	24.00	15.00 - 24.00		n/a
Manganese (ppb)	n/a	n/a	11.0	0.77 - 17.00	3/6/2018 and 9/11/2018	n/a
Bromide (ppb)	n/a	n/a	47.0	47.00 - 49.00	3/6/2018 and 9/11/2018	n/a
Dichloroacetic Acid (ppb)	n/a	n/a	0.27	0.20 - 0.32	3/6/2018 and 9/11/2018	n/a

**Table C.**

Contaminant (units)	Facility Name	Sample Point Name	Collection Date	MRL	Analytical Result Value
<b>Other Detected Contaminants</b>					
HAA5 (ppb)	Distribution System	Well No. 5	3/6/2018	n/a	0.306
		Well No. 7	3/6/2018	n/a	0.200
			9/11/2018	n/a	0.318
HAA9 (ppb)	Distribution System	Well No. 5	3/6/2018	n/a	0.306
		Well No. 7	3/6/2018	n/a	0.200
			9/11/2018	n/a	0.318
Manganese (ppb)	KW617	Entry Point to Dist. System	9/11/2018	0.4	16.895
			3/6/2018	0.4	16.280
	BF566	Entry Point to Dist. System	9/11/2018	0.4	14.182
			3/6/2018	0.4	13.901
	HR527	Entry Point to Dist. System	9/11/2018	0.4	12.844
			3/6/2018	0.4	12.561
	BF551	Entry Point to Dist. System	3/6/2018	0.4	0.933
			9/11/2018	0.4	0.774

**MRL** - Minimum Reporting Level: The minimum concentration that can be reported by a laboratory as a quantitated value for a method analyte in a sample following analysis.

**pCi/l** - picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)

**ppm** - parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)

**ppb** - parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/l)

**SMCL** - Secondary drinking water standards or Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels for contaminants that affect taste, odor, or appearance of the drinking water. The SMCLs do not represent health standards.

**TCR** - Total Coliform Rule

## Contaminants with a HAL or a SMCL

The following Table D. list contaminants which were detected in your water and that have either a Health Advisory Level (HAL) or a Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (SMCL), or both. There are no violations for detections of contaminants that exceed Health Advisory Levels, Groundwater Standards or Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels. Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels are levels that do not present health concerns but may pose aesthetic problems such as objectionable taste, odor, or color. Health Advisory Levels are levels at which concentrations of the contaminant present a health risk.

**Table D.**

Contaminant (units)	SMCL	HAL	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2021)	Typical Source of Contamination
<b>HAL or SMCL Contaminants</b>						
Aluminum (ppm)	0.05	0.2	0.01	0.00 - 0.01	8/5/2019	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Chloride (ppm)	250		45.00	3.00 - 45.00	8/5/2019	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits, road salt, water softeners
Iron (ppm)	0.3		0.26	0.07 - 0.26	8/5/2019	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits, industrial wastes
Manganese (ppm)	0.05	0.3	0.02	0.00 - 0.02	8/5/2019	Leaching from natural deposits
Sulfate (ppm)	250		24.00	15.00 - 24.00	3/4/2020	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits, industrial wastes

## PFAS

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are man made chemicals that have been widely used in a variety of products including food packaging, adhesives, non-stick cooking surfaces, and fire fighting foam since the 1950's. PFAS do not break down in the environment and can be found in air, soil, fish, and water. Scientists are still learning about the health effects that various PFAS can have on the body. To date, studies among people have shown that high levels of certain PFAS can increase cholesterol levels, decrease antibody levels in response to vaccines, and decrease fertility in women. People can reduce their risk of health effects by reducing their exposure to PFAS.

In 2022, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WI DNR) is conducting a voluntary statewide investigation into the occurrence of PFAS in drinking water at municipal drinking water suppliers in Wisconsin. Stoughton Utilities has volunteered to sample for PFAS to proactively assess the potential impacts of PFAS in the drinking water and to quickly take steps to protect the health of our customers if needed. Sample results will be posted on our website as they become available.

Stoughton Utilities is working closely with WI DNR to coordinate outreach and educational materials for residents on PFAS, including health-related information and steps to reduce potential exposures. Additional health information regarding PFAS can be found at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/chemical/pfas.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/chemical/pfas.htm).



### Did You Know?

- The average American family uses more than 300 gallons of water per day at home. Roughly 70 percent of this use occurs indoors.
- About 24% of the water we use literally goes down the toilet.
- Household leaks can waste approximately 900 billion gallons of water annually. This is equal to the annual household use of nearly 11 million homes.

## Lead & Copper

In addition to the contaminants in Tables A, B, C, and D., we also regularly test for lead and copper in drinking water. Lead and copper are naturally occurring metals that can be found in the environment and can sometimes make their way into our drinking water. Both metals can be toxic if ingested in large quantities. The following Table E. shows the results of our lead and copper monitoring for the period from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2019.

Although the majority of lead exposure comes from sources around the home and in the environment, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that between 10 - 20% of lead exposure may come from drinking water.

Stoughton's water does not have lead present when it leaves our wells, but can become contaminated as it travels through lead service pipes that have started to corrode over time.

There are a number of factors that can contribute to the amount of lead that enters your drinking water, including the corrosivity of the water, the temperature of the water as it passes through the pipes, and the length of time the water stays in the pipes. Hot water and water that has been sitting in pipes for long periods of time are more likely to pick up contaminants from the pipes and fixtures.

**Table E.**

Contaminant (units)	Action Level	MCLG	90th Percentile Level Found	# of Results	Sample Date	Typical Source of Contaminant
Copper (ppm) <sup>1</sup>	AL =1.3	1.3	0.2300	0 of 30 results were above the action level.	6/4/2019	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives
Lead (ppb) <sup>1</sup>	AL=15	0	18.00	6 of 30 results were above the action level.	6/4/2019	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

<sup>1</sup> Systems exceeding a lead and/or copper action level must take actions to reduce lead and/or copper in the drinking water. The lead and copper values represent the 90th percentile of all compliance samples collected. See pages 11-14 of this report for more information on actions Stoughton Utilities has taken to reduce these levels and how you can further reduce your risk of lead exposure.

## Health Information

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children.

Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Stoughton Utilities is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in your home's plumbing components. After your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for two minutes before using water for drinking or cooking.

If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems and or high blood pressure.

Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate level may rise quickly for short periods because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant, you should ask advice from your health care provider.



# Lead Service Line Replacement Project

Following 2019 water testing indicating some homes in Stoughton had elevated levels of lead in their drinking water, Stoughton Utilities began working to remove 100% of the lead water service lines in the city.

In April 2021, Stoughton Utilities began working closely with its construction contractor, Five Star Energy Services, to replace all of the 703 lead service lines in the city. This large-scale project concluded ahead of schedule on October 21, 2021.

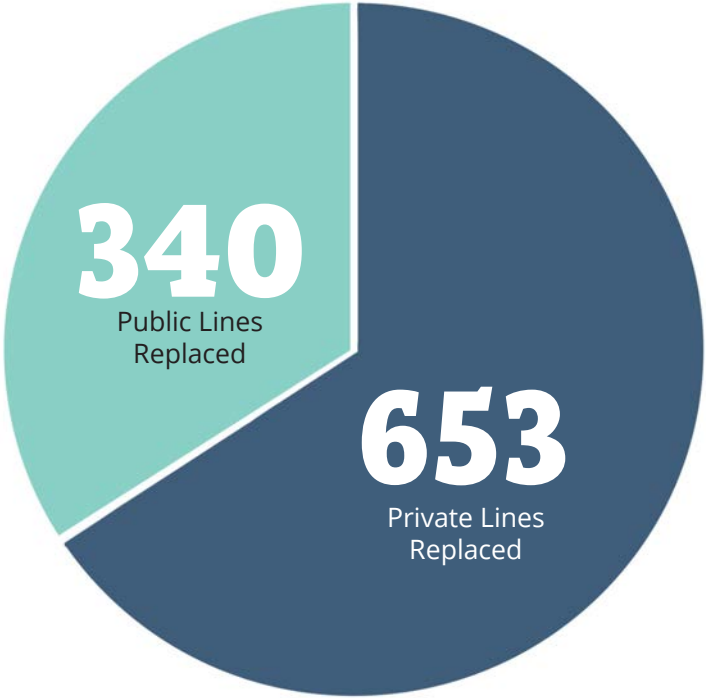
Stoughton Utilities worked closely with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to obtain grant funding to replace all privately-owned lead service lines in 2021 at no cost to individual homeowners. A grant in the amount of \$3,561,281 was received, which funded the full cost to replace the privately-owned portion of all lead service lines.

Throughout 2021, water service lines were replaced at 703 properties, making Stoughton's water distribution system completely lead free. Although all of the known lead water service lines in the city have now been replaced, some homes could still have plumbing components that contain lead, including pipe fittings, solder, and fixtures.



**100%**  
of the known lead service lines  
in the city have been replaced

**703**  
properties with water service  
lines replaced in 2021



## Reduce Your Lead Risk

Lead is a naturally occurring metal that can be toxic to humans and animals if ingested. Some materials in your home's interior plumbing, including pipes, solder, and fixtures, could contain traces of lead. Stoughton's water does not have lead present when it leaves our wells, but it can become contaminated as it travels through these plumbing materials. Due to changes in laws pertaining to plumbing materials, homes that were built prior to 1986 are more likely to have plumbing components that contain higher levels of lead. Plumbing fixtures produced before 2013 may also contain high levels of lead.

When your water sits for long periods of time inside water pipes and fixtures containing lead, some of the lead can dissolve into the water. There are a number of steps you can take to ensure that your water remains safe to drink.

### Cleaning Faucet Aerators

Cleaning your faucet aerators regularly is important to remove these particulates from your drinking water.

#### What is a faucet aerator?

An aerator is a device that is attached to the end of your faucet. Aerators help to save water and filter out sediment and large particles that can be picked up while your water moves through the distribution system, or from your interior plumbing materials corroding over time. Small lead particles could be caught in the aerator depending on your home's plumbing materials.

#### How often should you clean your aerators?

Faucet aerators should be cleaned every six months to remove any sediment and buildup. If you recently replaced lead pipes or fixtures, you may want to clean them immediately, and then periodically going forward.

Aerators should also be replaced once a year. Replacements can be purchased at your local hardware store.



## How to Clean Your Aerators

Before you get started, gather the following supplies:

- Rag
- Wrench or Pliers
- White vinegar
- Masking Tape
- Old toothbrush
- Small plastic bowl

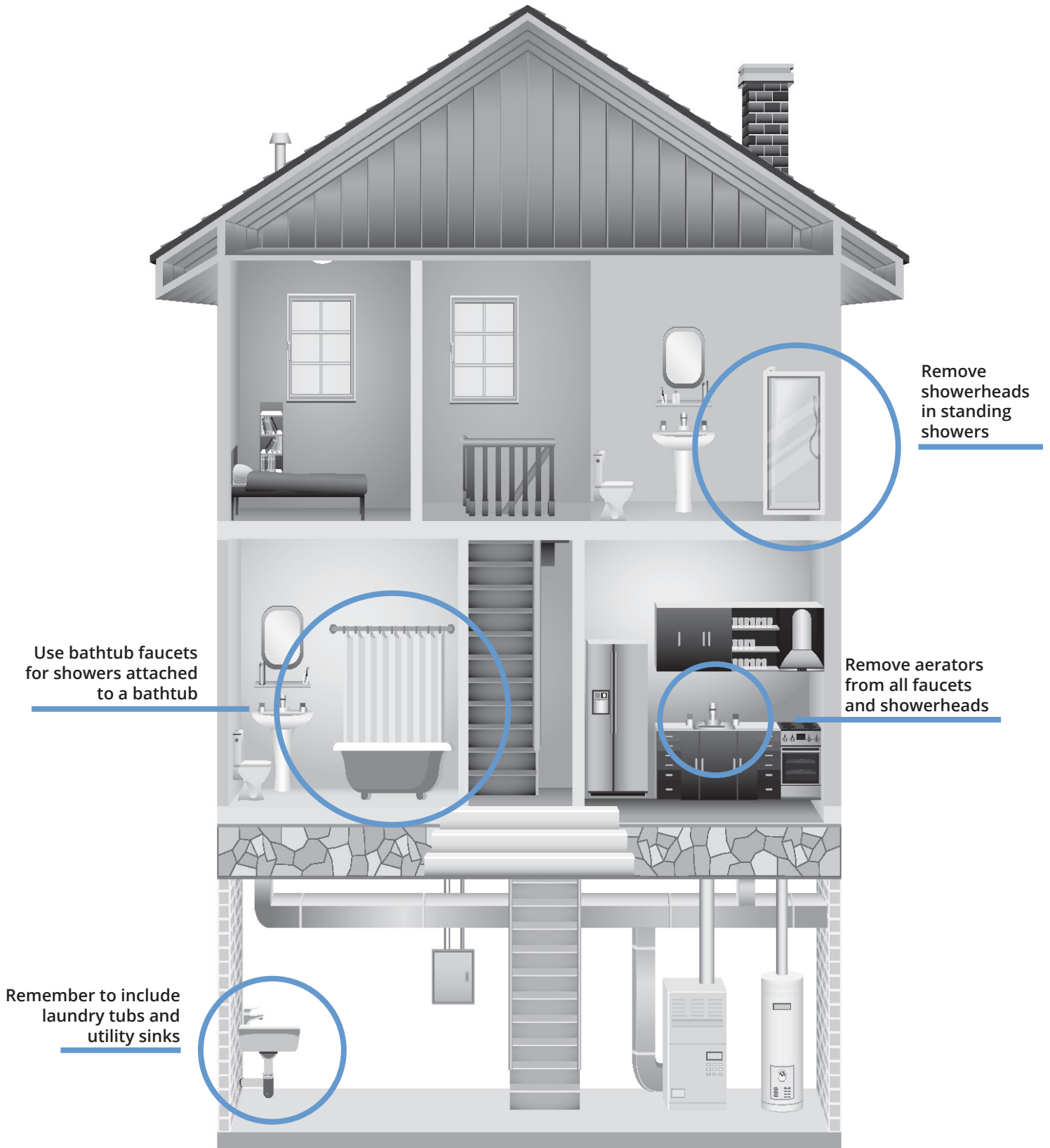
Follow these steps to clean your faucet aerators:

- Place a rag over the sink drain to prevent any of the pieces from going down the drain.
- If using a wrench or pliers, wrap masking tape around the aerator to prevent damage and scratches.
- Unscrew the aerator by turning counter-clockwise and separate each part (aerator housing, aerator, and rubber washer).
- Clean the parts by removing any pieces of sediment or debris. Soak the parts in white vinegar for a few minutes to remove mineral buildup. Scrub with a toothbrush if necessary.
- If aerator and rubber washer are in poor condition, consider replacing them. Parts can be purchased at your local hardware store.
- Put the aerator parts back together and screw the aerator back on the faucet.
- Repeat these steps for all faucets.

*Please note, some faucets have hidden aerators. If you can't easily locate the aerator on your faucet, follow the manufacturer's instructions. If you have a water filter attached to your faucet, you will not have an aerator.*

## Flush Your Indoor Plumbing

After having the lead service line replaced at your home, small amounts of lead from your old service line may remain in the pipes in your house. To remove this lead, you should flush your home's plumbing thoroughly. Make sure to use cold water only.



## How to Flush Your Indoor Plumbing

Follow these steps to flush your home's interior plumbing.

- Locate all of the water faucets in the house where you can run the water without the sink or tub overflowing. Be sure to include laundry tubs and utility sinks. For showers attached to bathtubs, use the bathtub faucet. For showers not attached to bathtubs, remove the showerhead if possible.
- Remove aerators from faucets and showerheads.
- Turn on the cold water faucet all the way, starting in the basement or lowest floor of your home. Leave water running from all faucets at the highest rate possible. Repeat on each floor of your home, moving from the basement up, until all faucets are on.
- Let the water run from all faucets for 30 minutes.
- After 30 minutes, start in the basement or lowest floor of your house and turn off all faucets in the order in which they were opened.
- Clean the aerators and/or showerheads, and put them back on each faucet. Replace old, worn aerators as necessary.

### Next Steps

- **Check your plumbing fixtures**

Certified lead free fixtures will include a certification mark either on the packaging or engraved into the fixture. Visit [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead) for more information on lead free certification. Replace fixtures that are not lead free certified with new fixtures manufactured after 2013.

- **Have your water tested**

You can request a test kit to have the water at your home tested for contaminants, including lead. Please contact a certified laboratory to request a test kit. Several options are provided on page 4 of this document.

- **Contact a plumber**

A certified plumber can help you determine if any of your home's fixtures, pipe fittings, or solder contain lead, and if they should be replaced with lead free materials.

### Tips

If you determine that you still have components in your home's drinking water system that contain lead, consider the following tips to minimize your families exposure.

- **Use cold water for drinking and cooking**

Do not drink or cook with hot tap water. Hot water can dissolve lead more quickly than cold water. Lead is not absorbed through the skin, so washing your hands and bathing with hot water is safe.

- **Let the water run**

Let the cold water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water has gone unused for more than 4 hours.

- **Use a filtration system**

Purchase a faucet mounted filtration system to filter your water before drinking or cooking with it. Filtration systems must be certified to ensure that they will remove lead from the water. You can also purchase filtered water pitchers that will filter lead out of your drinking water. Visit [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) for more information.

- **Eat a healthy diet**

Foods rich in iron help to protect the body from the harmful effects of lead, while foods rich in calcium and vitamin C help to reduce lead absorption.

- **Talk to your doctor**

If there are children in the home, you may want to have their doctor test their blood for lead. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that action be taken when the level of lead in a child's blood exceeds 5 micrograms per deciliter.

## Ongoing System Improvements

In 2022, Stoughton Utilities will be focusing on reconstruction work on South Academy Street, including abandoning an existing four inch water main, relocating fire hydrants to accommodate street reconfiguration, and reconstructing the sewer mains. Rehabilitation work at well no. 6 will be completed, including repairs and pump maintenance as necessary.

### Main Street Reconstruction Project

Stoughton Utilities is already in the planning phase for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Main Street and Highway 51 street reconstruction project to take place from 2025 to 2027. Minimal water work is expected on the east side of the city, while significant water main replacements and sewer reconstruction is being planned west of Page Street.

Stoughton Utilities will be coordinating our construction with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The project budget for water and wastewater infrastructure is projected to be \$1.7 million.

### Call or Click Before You Dig

Did you know that you must contact Diggers Hotline before any project that involves any digging in your yard? State law requires you to contact Diggers Hotline any time the soil is disturbed. If you do not contact Diggers Hotline and you damage any underground infrastructure while digging, you may be held liable for all repair costs and other damages.

At least three days before you dig, you must contact Diggers Hotline simply by calling (800) 242-8511, or dial 811. You can also submit your request online at [www.DiggersHotline.com](http://www.DiggersHotline.com).

## How to Contact Us

We welcome you to attend the monthly Stoughton Utilities Committee meetings. Meeting dates, locations, notices, agendas, and past meeting minutes are available at [stoughtonutilities.com](http://stoughtonutilities.com).

If you have any questions regarding this report, your drinking water utility, or Stoughton Utilities in general, please contact us at (608) 873-3379 or at [customerservice@stoughtonutilities.com](mailto:customerservice@stoughtonutilities.com).

If you have a water emergency, please contact us anytime, 24-hours per day and seven days per week, at (608) 873-3379.