

**MASSACHUSETTS WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 1064  
ACTON, MA 01720**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Jennifer Pederson

(978) 263-1388

[jpederson@masswaterworks.org](mailto:jpederson@masswaterworks.org)

ACTON, MA—Lead contamination of drinking water in Flint, Michigan has drawn much attention to the issue of lead water services and lead-containing water piping across the nation. It is known that elevated levels of lead can be potentially dangerous to infants and young children and for that reason, some sources of lead exposure within a home, such as lead-based paint, must currently be disclosed to a potential buyer.

A recently issued report by the Environmental Defense Fund gave Massachusetts a grade of “F” for lacking legal mandates to disclose lead water piping information during real estate transactions. This is not news to drinking water professionals in Massachusetts who recognized that this is an area that needs to be addressed and began talking last year about legislation to require such notification.

Massachusetts Water Works Association President Christine Millhouse states that in January of 2017, her organization approached State Representative Russell Holmes of Boston to file a bill to amend the existing lead paint disclosure statute to require sellers to notify buyers if they are aware they have lead-based plumbing or water piping. “Our profession is committed to protecting public health and safety by providing clean, safe drinking water. While existing regulations promote proper treatment to reduce corrosion and the leaching of lead, older homes could still have lead services (the pipe connecting the water main to the house) or internal plumbing containing lead, which could pose a problem. Potential buyers should be made aware if the home they are purchasing has such piping or plumbing.”

This bill will increase transparency and provide added protection of public health, especially for infants and young children. The water utility serving the City of Boston, the Boston Water & Sewer Commission, serves as a national model for the work they are doing to facilitate removal of older lead services. Homeowners can easily access information on the Commission’s website. When this sort of information is available it should not be burdensome for a homeowner to disclose it to a potential buyer.

The legislation, “An Act to Amend the Lead Law to include Water Piping,” is House Docket 3449 and has not yet been assigned to a committee. “Massachusetts Water Works Association thanks Representative Holmes and his colleagues who co-sponsored this legislation and we hope the Legislature will act swiftly to pass this important bill into law,” stated Jennifer Pederson, the Association’s Executive Director.

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Massachusetts Water Works Association (MWWA) is a membership organization dedicated to the advancement of the drinking water profession. Through education and advocacy, MWWA is committed to protecting public health and promoting a safe and sufficient supply of drinking water to Massachusetts consumers.