Date: December, 2016

Subject: Sampling for Lead in School Drinking

Dear School Superintendent or Principal:

The (XYZ Water District, Department, Utility, Company) provides water to your school. We are participating in an important project sponsored by the Maine Rural Water Association, Maine Water Utilities Association and the Maine Public Drinking Water Commission to encourage all schools to test their drinking water for the presence of lead. Elevated levels of lead in drinking water can cause permanent adverse health effects, especially in children. The State’s Drinking Water Program, which oversees all public water systems in the State, is assisting us with technical and financial support for this project.

Water utilities provide high quality, safe water to Maine schools. In most cases, elevated lead levels are likely to originate from internal plumbing and fixtures within a school. Testing schools’ water is an important first step to determine if elevated lead levels are present. If elevated lead levels are found, the next step is to eliminate or reduce lead sources. In some cases, adopting a daily morning routine of flushing the water at regularly used taps may prove an effective strategy for temporarily reducing lead levels within a drinking water system.

Current federal regulation does not require sampling for lead in schools that get their water from a water utility. As a result, the water quality inside these schools is largely unknown. Over the past year, some schools, water utilities and towns have voluntarily collected and tested water samples from selected schools, but many schools, about 350, have not yet been tested for lead.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. To support you in your efforts to test your school’s water, our staff will assist you with collecting water samples in your school(s). It is important that samples are carefully collected exactly according to the sample collection guidance referenced below, to ensure reliable results. Our staff is experienced with these sample collection methods. If you are interested in moving forward with this effort, the State has agreed to cover the costs of up to 10 water tests. After samples are collected and tested, results will be sent only to schools. Any additional testing you choose to do will need to be paid by your school(s). In some cases, additional sampling may be needed and schools should be prepared for this.

Through our membership in the statewide drinking water associations, we are hopeful to complete this collaborative effort with schools throughout the State by April 1, 2017.

While we are dedicated to facilitating this voluntary and collaborative effort, it is important to understand that this role is outside of any regulatory requirements for the water utility. If any elevated lead levels are found in schools, schools are responsible for developing a remediation plan. The State’s Drinking Water Program is a valuable resource which can provide helpful technical assistance regarding such remediation efforts.

Please contact us if you would like our help in collecting drinking water samples. Our contact information is included in the letterhead of this letter. To learn more about lead in drinking water, sample collection guidance or frequently asked questions, please go to the State Drinking Water Program’s Lead in Drinking Water webpage at [www.medwp.com](http://www.medwp.com).

Please contact me should you have any concerns or questions about this project.

Sincerely,

General Manager, Superintendent, XYZ Water Utility