



Received via email
9/16/2016
File Nos. 160811 and 160812

September 16, 2016

The Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco
400 McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Judge Stewart:

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the following is in response to the 2015-16 Civil Grand Jury report, *Drinking Water Safety in San Francisco: A Reservoir of Good Practice*. We would like to thank the members of the Civil Grand Jury for their interest in ensuring the continued excellence of water quality in San Francisco.

We are pleased that the Jury's report is largely favorable of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) for its stewardship of the City and region's water system. Highlighting the high quality and safety of drinking water in San Francisco, the report offers minor recommendations for improving the dissemination of water quality information. The main findings are that 1) the risk of lead in the water system is extremely low, 2) the SFPUC Water Quality Annual Report does not include drinking water contaminants that are below detection levels, and 3) water quality certification notices are not posted at City buildings and their drinking water taps. To address its findings, the report recommends disclosing all drinking water contaminants analyzed in the SFPUC Water Quality Annual Report, including those that are below detection levels and do not pose a public security issue; and creating a water quality certification program for buildings and posting signage at drinking water fixtures deeming them lead-safe.

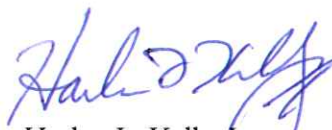
A detailed response from the Mayor's Office and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to the Civil Grand Jury's findings and recommendations follows.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this Civil Grand Jury report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edwin Lee".

Edwin Lee
Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Harlan L. Kelly, Jr.".

Harlan L. Kelly, Jr.
General Manager

Findings:

Finding F.A.1: The Jury was satisfied with San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) water stewardship as well as the near-term drinking water supply/demand outlook. SFPUC is to be commended.

Agree with finding.

Finding F.A.2: We see little risk of lead from SFPUC water lines.

Agree with finding.

Finding F.A.3: Currently, drinking water contaminants that are below detection limits for reporting are not shown in the annual water quality report, in accord with regulatory guidance.

Agree with finding.

Finding F.A.4: There are no water quality certification programs for buildings. Our public buildings, especially drinking fountains, would benefit from displaying dated, lead-safe seal/sticker from the SFPUC on our drinking water taps.

Agree with finding.

The SFPUC is not aware of any water quality certification program for buildings and agrees that there would be some public benefit associated with such a program. Yet, the creation of such a certification program would be extremely resource intensive and not provide public health value. The SFPUC has existing practical and cost effective means to provide assurances to our customers about lead (i.e., customers can already request lead tests for a nominal fee of \$25). We will investigate other cost-effective strategies to make any available data for our public facilities accessible through our city open data portals.

Finding F.A.5: The SFPUC Regional Water System has not been associated with any waterborne illnesses, and since 1993 this has been documented monthly. SFPUC is to be commended.

Agree with finding.

Recommendations:

Recommendation R.A.3: In the interest of transparency, all drinking water contaminants analyzed (analytes) that do not pose a public security issue should be disclosed in the SFPUC Water Quality Annual Report.

The recommendation has not been, but will be, implemented in the future.

This recommendation will be implemented in the City of San Francisco Annual Water Quality Report beginning with next year's 2016 Water Quality Report. Staff will insert a list of the aforementioned analytes either as a link inside or a part of the San Francisco Water Quality Report.

Recommendation R.A.4: SFPUC should create a water quality certification program for buildings, offering at least a dated, lead-safe seal/sticker on/near the fixture and visible to the consumer.

The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

This recommendation will not be implemented. The creation and regular implementation of an entirely new water quality certification program regarding lead would be extremely resource intensive. We appreciate the need to provide assurances to our customers about lead, we believe we achieve this goal in other ways - (i.e., customers can already request lead tests for a nominal fee of \$25).

We already implement an extensive ongoing lead abatement program. We removed all known lead service lines from the City distribution system decades ago. We are systematically checking the small percentage of service connections that are of unknown composition. We also regularly check the transmission system for appropriate corrosion control and periodically check for actionable lead levels at taps throughout the City. Furthermore, our Annual Water Quality Reports consistently contain information about lead and how consumers can test their individual faucets.

The SFPUC's lead program has been touted as an exemplary program for other water agencies to follow.