



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Date February 5, 1982

From John J. Cusack, Jr., Superintendent, Water Dept. **Reference**

Subject SODIUM CONTENT OF CAMBRIDGE DRINKING WATER IN 1981

In accordance with the public notification section of the State "Drinking Water Regulations" (310 CMR 22.16), the Water Department is required to notify its customers when the level of sodium in the water exceeds the maximum standard of twenty milligrams per liter (20 mg/l) as established by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (DEQE). Notification must be made in the form of a direct mailing or as an insert with water bills.

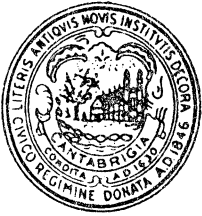
The attached "notification letter" has been prepared by the Water Department, with assistance from the Department of Health and Hospitals; and it has been endorsed by the Water Board. Please review this letter with the City Council to determine if there are any questions or additional information required prior to its release.

The notification letter will be sent out to all customers as a direct mailing; and it will be advertised as a public notice in the "Chronicle" and the "Tab" in an attempt to provide the information to tenants.

JJC/mp

Attachment

cc: Melvin H. Chalfen, M.D.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

MASSACHUSETTS

WATER DEPARTMENT
250 FRESH POND PARKWAY
CAMBRIDGE, MASS. 02138

617- 498-9070

January 29, 1982

Dear Customer:

Re: SODIUM CONTENT OF CAMBRIDGE DRINKING WATER

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (DEQE) has established a maximum standard of twenty milligrams per liter (20 mg/l) of sodium contained in drinking water. The average concentration of sodium contained in drinking water supplied by the Cambridge Water Department (C.W.D.) in calendar year 1981 has been thirty-four milligrams per liter (34 mg/l). In accordance with the public notification section of the State "Drinking Water Regulations" (310 CMR 22.16), the C.W.D. is required to report this information to its customers so that persons interested in limiting their sodium intake may make suitable adjustments to their diets.

Customary diets in this country include 2,500 to 7,500 milligrams of sodium per day; and the "low salt" diets prescribed by doctors typically contains 1,000 to 2,000 milligrams of sodium per day. The sodium concentration of the Cambridge Water supply may be of importance to persons with health problems that are influenced by their dietary intake of sodium. If you are already on a restrictive sodium diet, you may wish to consult with your physician about this matter.

Eventhough the sodium level of the Cambridge water is greater than the current DEQE maximum standard, it does not represent any health hazard. A comparison of the sodium levels contained in commonly eaten foods is indicated in the table below. (note: one liter is about one quart):

COMPARISON OF SODIUM LEVELS

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>MILLIGRAMS</u>
Cranberry Juice	6 oz. serving	9
Saltine Cracker	one	21
Chocolate Chip Cookie	one	29
CAMBRIDGE WATER	one liter	34
Mayonnaise	1 TBS serving	75
Peanut Butter	2 TBS serving	150
Cream of Wheat Cereal	2 ½ TBS serving	160
Raisin Bran Cereal	1.3 oz. serving	220
Milk	one quart	240
Potato Chips	1 oz. serving	260

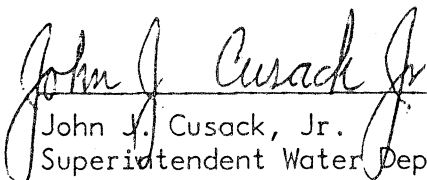
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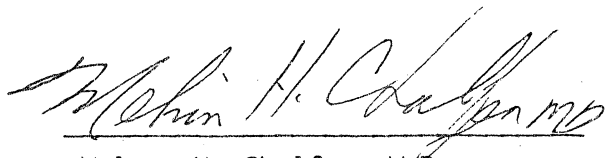
Although no public health hazard exists, the C.W.D. is concerned about this situation and is taking action to correct it. Sodium is primarily introduced into the water from:

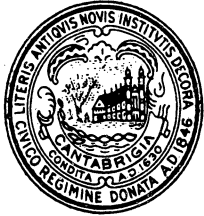
- (A) Salt used by the State of Massachusetts, Cities, Towns, Businesses, Industry and Private Parties for snow and ice control on roads, walks, and parking areas in Waltham, Weston, Lexington and Lincoln, which drain into the C.W.D., Hobbs Brook, and Stony Brook Reservoirs causing a large part of the problem.
- (B) Unprotected salt storage areas of these agencies, most specifically the Massachusetts Department of Public Works salt storage yard in Lexington near the interchange of Routes 128 and 2A.
- (C) Certain chemicals used in the water treatment process for corrosion control and fluoridation.

To reduce the sodium levels, the C.W.D. is trying to prevent the sodium from being introduced into the water. This is the most practical approach to the problem because the removal of sodium from water by methods currently available is expensive and inefficient. With respect to minimizing the entrance of sodium into the water from the sources listed above, the C.W.D. is:

- (1) Encouraging State, City and Town Public Works and Highways Departments; business, industry and private citizens, to use more sensible pavement salting programs, and to properly store and protect salt stockpiles. Several business operations off Route 128 in Waltham have already made commitments to the C.W.D. to either reduce or eliminate salting of their parking lots which are located within the watershed. The State Department of Public Works has informed the Drinking Water Branch of the Environmental Protection Agency that it is searching for a suitable site on which to relocate its Lexington salt storage yard.
- (2) Diluting, insofar as possible, water containing greater concentrations of sodium (Stony Brook Reservoir) with water containing lesser concentrations of sodium (Fresh Pond Reservoir).
- (3) Evaluating possible modifications to the corrosion control chemical treatment process at the Cambridge Water Treatment Plant.


John J. Cusack, Jr.
Superintendent Water Department


Melvin H. Chalfen, M.D.
Commissioner
Department of Health & Hospitals



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

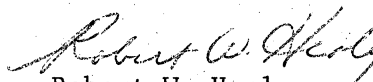
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

February 8, 1982

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed please find copy of a report from John J. Cusack, Jr.,
Superintendent of the Cambridge Water Department, relative to the sodium
content of Cambridge drinking water in 1981.

Very truly yours,


Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mbf
Enc.

Agenda Item Number Four

S-90

Re: report from the Water Dept., regarding the sodium content in Cambridge drinking water in 1981.

In City Council,

February 8, 1982

February 22, 1982

Placed
on
File