

Eric P. Raciti
50 Follen St. #102
Cambridge, MA 02138

June 1, 1998

Mayor Francis Duehay
26 Lowell Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Mr. Mayor:

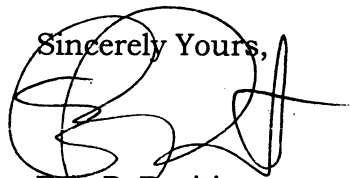
I wanted to write to you to express my gratitude for the outstanding job done by the Cambridge Police in making the Cambridge Common a safe and enjoyable public space.

As you are probably aware, the situation has drastically improved over last year. The summer of 1997 was punctuated by a virtual horde of campers descending nightly on the Common, leaving their campsites heaped with rubbish daily. Alcohol and drug use were rampant and unabashed. Public urination and defecation were commonplace, even in the children's playground. Discarded syringes and crack vials were not uncommon amidst the debris. Enormous piles of personal belongings were covered with tarps, and campers even watched television thanks to an electrical outlet near the telephones across from Radcliffe Yard.

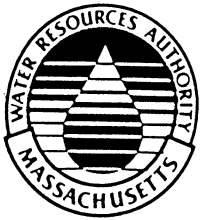
I understand that the welcome improvement to our neighborhood park is resulting from the deployment of bicycle-mounted police. I have also heard that this is an experimental program that has resulted from earmarked funding.

Speaking for my family and myself, I can only say "thank you" for the dramatic improvement to our community in Harvard Square, and voice my enthusiastic support for the measures you have thusfar taken.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'ERACITI', written over a circular scribble.

Eric P. Raciti



DRINKING WATER ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 20, 1998

CONTACT: Thomas Gawrys
Public Affairs
617-241-6057

MWRA WILL IMPROVE DRINKING WATER BY NEW pH SETTING

MWRA announced today that it will take another step to improve drinking water quality by a small and simple adjustment in water chemistry beginning July 27.

"The pristine waters from our Quabbin and Wachusett reservoirs have always presented one challenge," said MWRA Executive Director Douglas B. MacDonald. "The water has a low pH and a low alkalinity, which makes it a bit corrosive. As a result, lead can show up in tap water because of low-level leaching from lead present in customers own service lines and plumbing."

System-wide tests conducted in 1992 showed that MWRA water was too corrosive. In order to properly control the problem, in 1996 MWRA constructed the Interim Corrosion Control Facility in Marlborough. The pH and alkalinity of the water was then adjusted, pending further research on whether new pH levels might cause iron discoloration in the water.

"The results of the research study are in," MacDonald said, "and we are preparing to implement the recommendations at the ICC to achieve our goal of a pH of 9.0."

The two-year study conducted under the guidance of the American Water Works Association Research Foundation concluded the optimum chemistry of MWRA's drinking water is pH 9.0 and an alkalinity of 30 milligrams per liter.

"These are very familiar and comfortable values to waterworks operators across the country," MWRA Director of Waterworks William A. Brutsch. "Our research also concluded that the chances of interim iron discoloration were low. While minor water discoloration may be a temporary inconvenience to customers, it is important that we do this in order to achieve the long-term benefits of improved water chemistry."

The new operating parameters will make the water safer when used in old homes with lead in their plumbing fixtures. Lead levels at the tap, already improved by the changes made in 1996, should improve even further. In addition, chlorination improvements that MWRA has made in 1998 will be more effective and chlorine taste complaints should become less frequent.

"Our only concern," MacDonald said, "is that a few customer areas may experience short-term water discoloration from iron dissolving in the system during the adjustments. We want people to know that any changes they may see are related to our improvement program, just as local valve and hydrant maintenance sometimes causes unavoidable water color problems. Iron does not make the water unsafe to drink, but we encourage people not to do laundry if they notice yellow water at the tap."

Six thousand individual letters have been sent by MWRA to users with special water use needs, such as dialysis centers, to advise them of specific details of the water chemistry changes.

For further information about the pH change and other steps MWRA is taking to improve water quality, please call us at (617) 242-5323.

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Comm. & Rpts. from City
Officers #3

5725

A communication was received
from Mayor Duehay, transmitting
a communication from Thomas
Gawrys, Public Affairs, MWRA,
transmitting a press release
regarding improving drinking
water by new pH settings.

In City Council July 27, 1998

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