

# GLWA Corrosion Control Updates FAQ

**Overview:** After a multi-year, proactive study, GLWA is planning to update its corrosion control strategy through a phased adjustment to the current orthophosphate dosage used in its five water treatment plants (Lake Huron, Northeast, Southwest, Springwells, & Water Works Park). While there is no lead in GLWA's water and no lead pipes in GLWA's transmission system, upping the orthophosphate dosage will provide added protection for our member partners' local systems.



## **Is the water in the GLWA transmission system safe to drink and use for household and commercial purposes?**

*Yes. Nothing has changed in the quality of GLWA's water and it remains safe for consumption, as well as household and business use, throughout this process.*

## **Why do we add orthophosphate during water treatment?**

*Orthophosphate acts as "water's bodyguard," forming a protective layer within pipes to prevent metals such as lead, iron and copper from dissolving in the water.*

*GLWA has been adding orthophosphate into its water to control both corrosion and its effects on water quality since 1996. Since that time, optimal corrosion control has consistently been maintained in the water delivered by GLWA and monitored in accordance with EGLE regulatory requirements.*

*Corrosion control is a necessary practice, taken to protect public health while local systems work to comply with state and federal regulations requiring them to remove lead service lines.*

## **Is there lead in the water GLWA distributes to its member communities?**

*No. There is no lead in GLWA's water, and no lead pipes are used in GLWA's transmission system. Upping the orthophosphate dosage during the treatment process will provide added protection for our member partners' local systems*

## **What is the change being made to GLWA's corrosion control strategy?**

*GLWA will slowly increase the dosage of orthophosphate from 1.2 milligrams per liter to 2.4 milligrams per liter between October 2024 and February 2025. This phased approach will allow for GLWA to conduct additional testing to monitor for changes as the dosage increases.*

### **Why is this change happening now?**

*The change to GLWA's corrosion control strategy is being done based on the completion of a voluntary and proactive multi-year study to re-evaluate the level of anti-corrosion additive the Authority feeds into the water at its treatment plants.*

*The purpose of the change is to provide increased protections and assist our member partners in maintaining compliance with the changing lead action levels set by EGLE and updates to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Federal Lead and Copper Rule (LCR).*

### **What are the changes happening at the state and federal level with lead action levels?**

*Michigan's action level for lead in drinking water is set to decrease from 15 parts per billion to 12 parts per billion on January 1, 2025. In 2027, a host of other related changes will also go into effect with the federal LCR, including a decrease in the time that municipalities have to remove lead service lines and a new trigger level for additional testing.*

### **Who did the testing and how extensive was the process?**

*GLWA contracted with the nationally known engineering firm Arcadis to conduct the extensive study, which began in 2019. As a part of the study, specialty pipe loop rigs were constructed using pipes harvested from several local systems and installed at 10 testing sites – one for each of the five GLWA water treatment plants and five positioned at other locations within its member partner's local distribution systems. Each member partner site represented a single water treatment plant's water distribution service area. During the study, tests were performed using variable amounts of anti-corrosion chemicals to determine the most effective dosage recommendation.*

### **How long will it take GLWA to make this change?**

*Pending approval from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), GLWA plans to slowly increase the dosage of orthophosphate from 1.2 milligrams per liter to 2.4 milligrams per liter between October 2024 and February 2025.*

### **Will residents see or taste a difference in their water?**

*Orthophosphate is a tasteless and odorless food additive, and therefore will cause no change to the water people receive in their homes. The water remains safe for consumption, as well as for household and business use.*

### **Will increasing the amount of orthophosphate cause adverse effects on the wastewater treatment process?**

*Due to the increase in orthophosphate in the water treatment process, there will be an increase in the amount of phosphate that GLWA must remove during the wastewater treatment process. GLWA remains committed to ensuring that it continues to meet federal and state regulators' goal of reaching a 40 percent reduction in phosphorus. GLWA was the first treatment facility along the tributary to Lake Erie to achieve this milestone back in 2019.*