PUBLIC INFORMATION ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY OFFICIALS TAKE STEPS TO ADDRESS EMERGING CONCERNS REGARDING MANGANESE IN WATER

The City of Brooklyn Center's water supply is tested throughout the year to ensure it meets all safe drinking water standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency and State of Minnesota. While the city water meets the safe drinking water regulations, new information is emerging that raises concerns about the effects that high levels of manganese may have on humans, especially infants. While the City has taken steps to reduce the level of manganese in the water, households with infants less than one year old where infants consume formula made from tap water or drink tap water should follow Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recommendations to further reduce consumption of manganese.

There is no federal or state regulation for concentrations of manganese in drinking water for health reasons. Manganese has traditionally been considered an aesthetic issue, where high concentrations could cause staining or taste considerations. Manganese occurs naturally and can be found in rock, soil, air, food and in drinking water across Minnesota. Humans require small amounts of manganese to maintain health. While more research is needed to define the effects of manganese on the human body, too much manganese may affect learning and behavior. Therefore, the Minnesota Department of Health issued guidance values for manganese in drinking water of 100 parts per billion (ppb) for formula-fed infants and infants that regularly drink tap water. The manganese guidance value for children and adults (including nursing mothers) is 300 ppb.

The city's average level of manganese in water is 380 ppb. After learning of the MDH health advisory, the City took immediate steps to reduce the levels of manganese in the water. According to Steve Lillehaug, City Engineer/Public Works Director, "Since several of the City wells have lower manganese levels, we can reduce the amount of water flowing from wells with elevated manganese, which may reduce the level of Manganese below 300 ppb". Other ways to reduce manganese are being explored including changing other operational practices and the feasibility of building a water treatment plant. City staff will continue to monitor the water quality and work with the MDH and other experts as more information about manganese becomes available.

For households where infants less than one year old will be regularly drinking formula mixed with tap water or drinking plain tap water, the MDH health advisory recommends the following:

- Use a proper filter. Carbon filters (that may also contain an ion exchange resin) used in common pitcher or faucet filter systems (found at grocery and home stores) can remove approximately

50 percent of manganese from drinking water. To identify a filter that may remove manganese from water, visit http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/pou.html.

- Use bottled water only if the bottled water has been tested for manganese. Otherwise bottled water should not be considered safer than tap water.
- Consult with your physician if you have health questions.

* For nursing mothers, breast-milk is considered best for infants and it contains healthy amounts of manganese.

If residents use well water for drinking, the water should be tested for levels of manganese at an accredited laboratory.

More information about manganese is available on the MDH website:

- Manganese in Drinking Water at http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/risk/guidance/gw/mninfosheet.pdf
- Home Water Treatment Units: Point-of-Use Devices at http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/pou.html
- Manganese: Tiered Health Based Guidance for Water at http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/risk/guidance/gw/manganese.html.

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