

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and The City of Dallas are concerned about lead in your drinking water. **The City of Dallas found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings that were built prior to 1986 and contain copper plumbing assembled using lead solder.** Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to lower your risk of lead exposure.

During February 2011, sixty-two households participated in the City's routine monitoring program that tests for copper and lead in water samples collected inside homes/buildings that contain copper plumbing assembled with lead solder. Following is a brief summary of the results from the sampling event.

- Copper and lead were not detected in water samples taken from the city water lines that deliver water to our water users.
- **Lead was measured at a level above the action level in water samples from nine of the residences.**
- Lead was detected at a level below the action level in water samples from ten of the residences.
- Lead was not detected in water samples from eleven of the residences.
- Copper levels in water samples from all 30 of the residences tested were below the action level.

Most of the residences involved in the 2011 testing have been participating in the program for the past fifteen years. Each residence was sampled once each year during the first three years and once every three years thereafter. Prior to this years sampling event, no samples from residences involved in this monitoring program were found to have copper and lead concentrations above the action levels. The city will investigate and implement the control measures necessary to achieve its goal of having no lead or copper above the action level.

RESPONSE TO LEAD TEST RESULTS

The City of Dallas has and will continue to take the following actions in response to finding elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes:

1. Retest to determine if lead is still present in the water in the affected homes following changes that have been made and to help identify further adjustments that may be needed.
2. Make necessary adjustments and implement controls to reduce corrosion potential that could result in lead entering the water from household plumbing.
3. Test additional homes and increase the frequency of testing to twice per year for at least one year after adjustments are completed.
4. Continue with the public education program.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF LEAD

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children.

Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

EXPOSURE TO LEAD

The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in

certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the work place and exposure from certain hobbies (lead can be carried on clothing and shoes). Brass faucets, fittings and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water can receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

HOW LEAD ENTERS OUR WATER

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome-plated brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect houses and buildings to water mains (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials to 8.0%.

When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon if the water has not been used all day, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN YOUR WATER

1. **Run your water to flush out lead.** If water has not been used for several hours, run water for 15 – 30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking.
2. **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Lead dissolves more easily into hot water.

3. **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
4. **Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.** You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) International at 1-800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters.
5. **Test your water for lead.** The city will be conducting a retest of the residences involved in its copper and lead program and begin monitoring a limited number of additional residences in the near future. Testing will continue twice annually until lead is found to be below the action level. Further regular testing will follow according to a schedule determined based on the testing results. Please contact us at 503-831-3562 if you would like to participate in the sampling program. To conduct your own water testing, Waterlab in Salem offers this service. You can contact Waterlab at 503-363-0473.
6. **Get your child tested.** Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead, if you are concerned about exposure.
7. **Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.** Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8% lead to be labeled as "lead-free." Visit the NSF web site at www.nsf.org to learn more about lead containing plumbing fixtures.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

You can consult a variety of sources for additional information. Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with



information about the health effects of lead.

Call us at the following numbers or visit our Web sites for more information:

City of Dallas

State Water System ID#4100248

Web site: www.ci.dallas.or.us

General Information: 503-623-2338

Public Works Department: 503-831-3562

Polk County

Web site: www.co.polk.or.us

County Health Officer: 503-623-8175

Oregon Department of Human Services

Web site: www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/dwp

Duty Officer: 971-673-0405

United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building, contact USEPA at:

www.epa.gov/lead

This Pamphlet was prepared and distributed during June 2011

Note: The Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) for lead is zero and the Action Level is 15 ppb. The MCLG is the level of the contaminant in drinking water below, which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety. The action level is the concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

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