

## HEALTH EFFECTS OF LEAD

Lead is a common metal found throughout the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, certain types of pottery porcelain and pewter, and water. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body. Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children and pregnant women. Amounts of lead that won't hurt adults can slow down normal mental and physical development of growing bodies. In addition, a child at play often comes into contact with sources of lead contamination - like dirt and dust - that rarely affect an adult.

## 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 water distribution system and 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 your house to the water main (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 after returning from work or school, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

For more information, call (973) 733-6370



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Newark City Hall  
920 Broad Street  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

## 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. State and local government agencies that can be contacted include:

**City of Newark Department of  
Water & Sewer Utilities**  
(973) 697-5458

**City of Newark Department of Engineering  
Office of Uniform Construction Code**  
(973) 733-3695

**City of Newark Department of Health &  
Community Wellness**  
(973) 733-5323

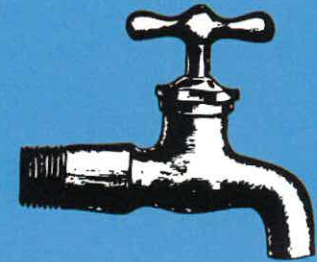
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CITY OF **NEWARK**  
Mayor Ras J. Baraka



# LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

AN INFORMATIONAL GUIDE

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Brought to you by the City of Newark  
Department of Water & Sewer



## HOW THE EPA WORKS WITH THE CITY OF NEWARK TO PROTECT YOU

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the City of Newark, Department of Water & Sewer Utilities are concerned about lead in your drinking water.

Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes in the community have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/L). Under Federal law we are required to have a program in place to minimize lead in your drinking water. Our program has been in place since 1994. It is currently under review and will be completed this year (2018).

This program includes:

1. Corrosion control treatment (treating the water to make it less likely that lead will dissolve into the water);
2. Source water treatment (removing any lead that is in the water at the time it leaves our treatment facility); and
3. A public education program.

We are also required to replace the portion of each lead service line that we own if the line contributes lead concentrations of more than 15 ppb after we have completed the comprehensive treatment program. If you have any questions about how we are carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation please give us a call at (973)697-5458. This brochure also explains the simple steps you can take to protect yourself by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

## STEPS TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

Despite our best efforts mentioned earlier to control water corrosivity and remove lead from the water supply, lead levels in some homes or buildings can be high. To find out whether you need to take action in your own home, have your drinking water tested to determine if it contains excessive concentrations of lead.

Testing the water is essential because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water. You can contact the City of Newark Department of Water & Sewer Utilities. For more information on having your water tested, please contact the City of Newark at [waterandsewer@ci.newark.nj.us](mailto:waterandsewer@ci.newark.nj.us).

If a water test indicates that the drinking water drawn from a tap in your home contains lead above 15 ppb, then you should take the following precautions:

### 1. FLUSH YOUR SYSTEM.

Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your family's health. To flush, let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in a faucet has gone unused for more than six hours.

### 2. USE ONLY COLD WATER FOR COOKING AND DRINKING.

Try not to cook with, or drink water from the hot water tap. Hot water can dissolve more lead more quickly than cold water. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and heat it on the stove.

### 3. REMOVE LOOSE SOLDER AND DEBRIS FROM PLUMBING MATERIALS.

Remove loose solder and debris from the plumbing materials installed in newly constructed homes or homes in which the plumbing has recently been replaced. To do this, remove the faucet strainers from all taps and run the water for 3 - 5 minutes.

### 4. IDENTIFY AND REPLACE LEAD SOLDER.

If your copper pipes are joined with lead solder that has been installed illegally since it was banned in 1986, notify the plumber who did the work and request that he or she replaces the lead solder with lead-free solder.

### 5. FIND OUT WHETHER YOUR SERVICE LINE IS MADE OF LEAD.

Determine whether or not the service line that connects your home or apartment to the water main is made of lead. The best way to determine if your service line is made of lead is to contact the City of Newark's Department of Water & Sewer Utilities at [waterandsewer@ci.newark.nj.us](mailto:waterandsewer@ci.newark.nj.us).

Homes built after 1986 do not have lead service lines.

### 6. HAVE AN ELECTRICIAN CHECK YOUR WIRING.

If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes, corrosion may be greater.

*If a water test indicates that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations in excess of 15 ppb after flushing, or after we have completed our actions to minimize lead levels, then you may want to take the following additional measures:*

#### - PURCHASE OR LEASE A HOME TREATMENT DEVICE.

Home treatment devices are limited in that each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected, and all of the devices require periodic maintenance and replacement

#### -PURCHASE BOTTLED WATER FOR DRINKING AND COOKING

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