



Superintendent
Robert Cumiskey

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

City of Cape May found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and children. Contact us at 609-884-9575 to obtain a translated copy of the public education materials or to request assistance in the appropriate language.

City of Cape May found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. This means that some water samples collected from customers' taps exceeded the lead action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) from 1/1/2023-6/30/2023 and this information is required to be sent because City of Cape May has a lead action level exceedance. The action level is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. An action level exceedance is determined by measuring the highest concentration of lead in tap water that is exceeded by 10 percent of the sites sampled during a monitoring period (referred to as the "90th percentile"). If water from the tap does exceed the lead action level, then the water system must take certain steps to correct the problem. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. *Please read this information closely and in its entirety to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.*

Landlords must distribute this information to every tenant as soon as practicable, but no later than three business days after receipt. Delivery must be done by hand, mail, or email, and by posting the information in a prominent location at the entrance of each rental premises, pursuant to section 3 of P.L. 2021, c. 82 (C.58:12A-12.4 et seq.).

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. In other words, it is the fetus that is at risk because developing fetuses receive lead from the mother's bones. Children and fetuses absorb more lead into their bodies than adults and are more susceptible to its effects on brain development; however, most children with elevated blood lead levels do not exhibit any symptoms, but effects may appear later in life

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, cosmetics, imported spices and other food. Other sources include exposure in the workplace and exposure from certain hobbies like shooting ranges and fishing (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children's metal jewelry. 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 pipes, brass, and chrome-brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of or lined with lead. When water remains in contact with lead pipes or plumbing materials containing lead over time, 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, may contain elevated levels of lead.

- Homes and buildings in New Jersey built before 1987 are more likely to have lead pipes and/or lead solder.
- Service lines, which may also contain lead, are the individual pipes that run from the water main in the street to a home or building and consist of two portions. The first portion is the section of the service line from the water main to the curb stop and the second portion is the section from the curb stop to the home. Ownership of the service line varies by water system, but for City of Cape May, the service line is owned partially by the water system and property owner.

- Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free", may also contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, that contain a maximum of 0.25 percent lead to be labeled as "lead free". However, prior to January 4, 2014, "lead free" allowed up to 8 percent lead content of the wetted surfaces of plumbing products including those labeled National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) certified. Consumers should be aware of their current fixtures and take appropriate precautions.

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 may receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water. When there are elevated levels of lead in your water, drinking water is likely to be a more important source of exposure.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water

1. Find out if you have a lead service line. Residents and customers are encouraged to check their portion of the service line for lead, and we are asking you to contact us at 609-884-9575 if a lead service line is identified so we can update our records. Lead service lines in New

Jersey are water supply connections made of, or lined with, a material consisting of lead, and which connects a water main to a building inlet. Lead pigtailed, lead goosenecks, and other lead fittings are also considered to be lead service lines along with galvanized service lines. We will be notifying those addresses served by a lead service line according to our records on 8/9/2023 by mail.

2. Replace service lines containing lead. In New Jersey all lead service lines within our service area must be replaced in full, from the street to home regardless of whether we are exceeding the lead action level. We are required to replace all lead service lines no later than 2031. We have a lead service line replacement plan to meet this requirement. Contact 609-884-9576 to learn more about replacing the lead service line on your property.

3. Find out if you have interior lead plumbing or solder. If your home/building was constructed prior to 1987, it is important to determine if interior lead solder or lead pipes are present. You can check yourself, hire a licensed plumber, or check with your landlord.

4. Replace plumbing fixtures and service lines containing lead. Replace brass faucets, fittings, and valves that do not meet the current definition of "lead free." The current definition went into effect January 4, 2014; therefore, any "lead free" plumbing materials purchased and/or installed prior to that date should be discarded or replaced. Visit the NSF website at www.nsf.org to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

5. Run the cold water to flush out lead. Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer the water resides in plumbing the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap means running the cold-water faucet for about 15 to 30 seconds. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of the plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your health. It usually uses less than one gallon of water. For those with lead service lines or until you determine if you are served by one, let the water run from the tap longer based on the length of the lead service line and the plumbing configuration in your home. In other words, the larger the home or building and the greater the distance to the water main (in the street), the more water it will take to flush properly.

6. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Because lead from lead-containing plumbing materials and pipes can dissolve into hot water more easily than cold water, never drink, cook, or prepare beverages including baby formula using hot water from the tap. If you have not had your water sampled or if you know or suspect you have a lead service line, it is recommended that bottled or filtered water be used for drinking and

preparing baby formula. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and then heat it.

7. Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water will not reduce lead.

8. Use alternative sources or treatment of water. If there is confirmed or suspected lead-containing materials, such as a lead service line and/or interior lead plumbing or lead solder, in your home or building, you may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 1-800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

9. Regularly remove and clean aerators/screens on plumbing fixtures. Over time, particles and sediment can collect in the aerator screen. Regularly remove and clean aerators screens located at the tip of faucets and remove any particles.

10. Test your water for lead. Call us at 609-884-9577 to find out how to get your water tested for lead. Testing is essential because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water. The Department has low cost options for this testing available.

11. 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 lead exposure. Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead. Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead. New Jersey law requires that children be tested for lead in their blood at both 1 and 2 years of age (12 and 24 months), and before they are 6 years old if they have never been tested before or if they have been exposed to a known source of lead. You can find out more about how to get your child tested and how to pay for it at <https://www.state.nj.us/health/childhoodlead/testing.shtml>. Children 3 to 5 years of age should also be tested if they have not been tested before. The steps described above will reduce the lead concentrations in your drinking water. However, if a water test indicates that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations more than 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:

12. Have an electrician check your wiring. If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes, corrosion may be greater. Check with a licensed electrician or your local electrical code to determine if your wiring can be grounded elsewhere. DO NOT attempt to change the wiring yourself because improper grounding can cause electrical shock and fire hazards.

13. Water softeners and reverse osmosis units

will remove lead from water but can also make the water more corrosive to lead solder and plumbing by removing certain minerals; therefore, the installation of these treatment units at the point of entry into homes with lead plumbing should only be done under supervision of a qualified water treatment professional.

What Happened?

What Is Being Done?

The City of Cape May has been testing for lead since 1990 and has never had an action level exceedance. We have been proactive in locating and removing lead service lines since 2000. Please visit <https://www.capemaycity.com/departments/WaterSewer> for the lead service inventory and additional information.

We are required by New Jersey law, P.L. 2021, c.183, to replace 10% of the lead service lines in the water system every year, on average, and complete our program by July 2031. To date we have replaced 42 of our initial 119 lead service lines. City of Cape May is continuing both monitoring efforts and public education about lead in drinking water.

For More Information

For more information, call us at 609-884-9576 or visit our website at <https://www.capemaycity.com/departments/WaterSewer>. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at <http://www.epa.gov/lead>, call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD or Safe Drinking Water Act hotline at 1-800-426-4791, or contact your health care provider. You can also consult a variety of sources for additional information:

- Your water system can be found by searching "envirofacts" on the EPA's website. You will then proceed to the SDWIS (Safe Drinking Water Information System) data search for your specific geographic location. <https://enviro.epa.gov/>

- You can check your water system's analytical results and monitoring requirements (i.e., the frequency of sampling and number of samples) on New Jersey Drinking Water Watch at www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/waterwatch.

- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Water Supply and Geoscience, at (609) 292-2957 or watersupply@dep.nj.gov, can provide you with further information and helpful links on lead and water systems.

This notice is being sent to you by City of Cape May, New Jersey Public Water System Identification Number (PWSID) 0502001.

*Please share this information with all the other people who consume water provided by City of Cape May, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

* Date Notification was distributed 6/29/2023