



LEAD IN DRINKING WATER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Elevated levels of lead in drinking water has been found in some homes or buildings in Lake Mills. Lead is not in the water supply system, but comes from lead leaching into water from lead service lines (LSL) that serve some homes and businesses.

Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. This information describes what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

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.

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.

Lead is stored in the bones, and can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones while in utero, which may affect the child's brain development.

Sources of lead in drinking water

Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials

containing lead in lead service laterals and household plumbing. 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, typically contains high levels of lead.

Steps you can take to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water

To find out whether you need to take action it is strongly advised you 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.

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:

- ✓ 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 6 hours. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15–30 seconds. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your family's health. It usually uses less than one or 2 gallons of water and costs less than 25 cents per month.
- ✓ Do not cook with, or drink water from the hot water tap. Hot water can dissolve more lead more quickly than cold water.

- ✓ Remove loose lead solder and debris from the plumbing materials installed in newly constructed facilities, or buildings in which the plumbing has recently been replaced, by removing the faucet strainers from all taps and running the water from 3 to 5 minutes.
- ✓ If your copper pipes are joined with lead solder that has been installed illegally since it was banned in Wisconsin on September 24, 1984, notify the plumber who did the work and request that he or she replace the lead solder with lead-free solder. Lead solder looks dull gray, and when scratched with a key looks shiny. In addition, notify the department of natural resources about the violation.
- ✓ Contact the city of Lake Mills to determine whether or not the service line that connects your buildings to the water main is made of lead. Call 648-2344 and ask for the lead line inspector. He'll schedule a time to come to your home or business and inspect the service pipe near your water meter.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Replace fixtures that are known to contribute lead to drinking water with "lead-free" fixtures.

If a water test shows elevated lead levels

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 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 water treatment device (filter). Water 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. Devices such as reverse osmosis systems or distillers can effectively remove lead from your drinking water. Some activated carbon filters may reduce lead levels at the tap, however all lead reduction claims should be investigated. Be sure to check that the filter you choose is certified to remove lead..
- Purchase bottled water for drinking and cooking.
- You can consult a variety of sources for additional information. Family doctors or pediatricians can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead.

State approved laboratories

Labs in our area that you can call to have your water tested for lead:

State Lab of Hygiene
2601 Agriculture Dr
Madison WI 53707
(608) 224-6202 (Lab #999)

Northern Lakes Services
2420 N. Grandview Blvd
Waukesha, WI 53188
262-547-3408

*There is typically a charge for these tests.

You can also contact:

Jefferson County Health Department
Gail Scott
1541 Annex Road
Jefferson, WI 53549
920-674-7442

Wisconsin Department of Health Services
608-266-1865

Visit the Environmental Protection Agency
Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/lead>

We certify that the information and statements contained in this Public Education are true and correct and have been provided to consumers in accordance with the delivery, content, format and deadline requirements of Subchapter II of ch. NR 809, Wis. Adm. Code.

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