

Lead in Drinking Water Education



The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and **Braddock Water Authority** 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 by **December 2019**.

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 **412-351-2272**.

This brochure also explains the simple steps you can take to protect yourself by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

Important Information about Lead in Your Drinking Water Braddock Water Authority found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings.

Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

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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 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 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.

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, 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 or shoes). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children's metal jewelry.

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 percent lead to be labeled as "lead-free."

Our water supplier is Wilkinsburg Penn Joint Water Authority. Wilkinsburg Penn Joint Water Authority does not have any lead in its source water or water mains in the street. When water is in contact with service lines, and plumbing containing lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have lead pipes or lead solder.

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.

Don't forget about other sources of lead such as lead paint, lead dust, and lead in soil. Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead.

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

1. Run your water to flush out lead. Run water for 15-30 seconds to flush lead from interior plumbing or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking, if it hasn't been used for several hours.

2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.

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 NSF International at 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 instructions to protect water quality.

5. Test your water for lead. Call us at 412-351-2272 to find out how to get your water tested for lead. At this time, Braddock Water Authority does not conduct testing, but we are in the process of identifying resources we can refer you to.

6. Get your child's blood 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 and replace plumbing fixtures containing lead. New 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."

**WHAT HAPPENED?
WHAT IS BEING DONE?**

The Braddock Water Authority is doing everything legally possible to ensure that lead is eliminated from our water. None of the Borough's mainlines are lead. The Borough had the foresight to change out any of its lead pipes in its distribution system in 1994. Every service line leading up to the homeowner's curb box, which is the limit of our legal authority, has been replaced. There are still some customers who have lead lines on their side of the curb box, which is the property owner's responsibility to replace.

As a courtesy, the Braddock Water Authority can let customers know if they do have a lead service line on their property, but it is up to the property owner to remove and replace their lead pipes. The water we purchase does contain a chemical to inhibit the leaching of lead from pipes if your pipes have lead.

Every 3 years Braddock Water Authority (BWA) conducts a Lead and Copper Water Sampling of tap water of residents' homes who have lead lines. This September 2018, BWA conducted a sampling. Once the results were returned, elevated lead levels of lead in drinking water was found in 3 homes in Braddock.

Additionally, community conversations will be held on December 11, from 6 - 7 p.m., and December 14, from 1-4 p.m. to provide face to face education and answer any questions customers may have.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call us at 412-351-2272. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/lead, or contact your health care provider.

**Braddock Water Authority – November 29, 2018
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