

Other Options for Reducing Lead

Some treatment devices can reduce the amount of lead in your drinking water. Reverse-osmosis and distillation units can be used for that purpose. Since these devices also demineralize water, they should be installed only at the faucet.

They can be expensive and must be regularly maintained to work well. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations for operation and maintenance to ensure that the treatment equipment works correctly.

Check the product literature to be sure it has been certified for lead removal by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF). For more information, visit the NSF web site at <http://www.nsf.org>.

What Are We Doing about the Problem?

We are taking a number of steps to deal with the lead problem. They include:

- checking the water sources in the system for the presence of lead.
- implementing corrosion control strategies to make the water less likely to absorb lead from materials in the plumbing system.
- exploring other sources, such as an alternative source of water.

How Can I Tell if The Water in My Home Has Too Much Lead?

Many laboratories can test your water to see if there is a lead problem. Fees will vary between labs. Check the internet for "Laboratories-Testing."

For More Information

If you have questions about lead and drinking water, call us at: (952) 467-3232

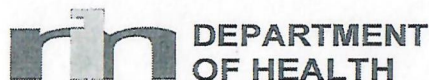
Or visit our website at: www.cityofhamburgmn.com

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at www.epa.gov/lead, or contact your health care provider.

This notice is being sent to you by

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<http://www.health.state.mn.us/water>

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Lead Public Education Brochure
January 2008

Important Information About Lead In Your Drinking Water

let it run...



...and get the lead out!

CITY OF HAMBURG

found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings.

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. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities.

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.

Lead is rarely found in natural sources of water such as rivers and lakes or underground aquifers.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal, used in many consumer products. It can be found in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, some types of pottery, pewter and crystal, and water.

Drinking water is not our only source of lead exposure, but it can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure.

Usually, lead gets into your water after it leaves the treatment plant. This usually happens through the corrosion of materials containing lead in household plumbing.

The most likely sources of lead in your household water are lead pipes, lead solder on copper pipes, brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," or lead service lines connecting the water main to the inside plumbing.

Lead pipes are no longer installed for service lines or in household plumbing, and lead solder has been outlawed in Minnesota since 1985.

The amount of lead allowed in brass fixtures has also been limited, but can still contribute some lead to drinking water. Note that many faucets are made of brass even if they do not have a "brass" color.

Even with these restrictions in place, some homes, especially older homes, may still have significant amounts of lead in their plumbing systems.

Lead dissolves continuously into the water. Water that stands idle in pipes for long periods of time may have higher concentrations of lead than water that passes through without stopping.

Reducing Exposure to Lead in Water

Don't drink or cook with water that has been in your plumbing for more than six hours - overnight, for example, or while you were at work.

You can clear the water out of your pipes by letting the cold water faucet run until you can feel the water get colder. This will usually take from 30 to 60 seconds. This should be done with each faucet before water is drawn for drinking or cooking. Flushing a toilet, for example, will not completely clear water from pipes going to the bathroom sink.

Other household water uses will also help clear standing water from your home's plumbing. For example, you may want to establish a routine of doing household tasks that use water - such as showering, or running the dishwasher - first thing in the morning before using water for drinking or cooking. Keep in mind that you'll still need to flush individual faucets for a short time before using them for drinking water.

In addition, because hot water dissolves lead more quickly than cold water, water from the hot water tap should not be used for drinking or cooking. Water needed for these purposes should be drawn from the cold tap and then heated.

Lead in water can be a special problem for infants whose diets may be mostly liquids, such as baby formulas or concentrated juices mixed with water.

Smaller bodies can absorb lead more rapidly than bigger ones, so amounts of lead that won't hurt an adult can be very harmful to a child. It is especially important not to use hot water for making baby formula.

Boiling the water does not reduce lead levels and may actually increase them.

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.