



Important information about lead in drinking water



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To: City Of Hamtramck Water Customers
From: The City Of Hamtramck

The City of Hamtramck found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in two homes. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this notice 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.

Action Levels	90th Percentile Value	Range of results (minimum-maximum)	# of samples used for 90th Percentile
Lead 15 parts per billion (ppb)	28 ppb	0 ppb – 33 ppb	5
Copper 1.3 parts per million (ppm)	0.2 ppm	0 ppm – 0.3 ppm	5

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Other sources of lead exposure for most individuals are lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, 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).

Plumbing products such as pipes and fixtures, may contain lead. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead, but newer homes may also contain lead. Beginning in 2014, the law reduced the allowable level of lead in these products to a maximum of 0.25 percent to be labeled as “lead free.” Older fixtures may contain higher levels of lead.

The City of Hamtramck purchases its water from the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA). Our source water comes from the Detroit River, near Lake St. Clair. When water is in contact with pipes, service lines or plumbing that contains lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead. New homes may also have lead; even “lead-free” plumbing may contain some lead.

The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20 percent or more of a person’s potential exposure to lead. Infants who consume mostly mixed formula can receive 40 percent 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 Water

1. Run water to flush out lead. The more time water has been sitting in your home’s pipes, the more lead it may contain. Therefore, if water has not been used for several hours, run the water before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes lead-containing water from the pipes.

- If you do not have a lead service line, run the water for 30 seconds to two minutes, or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature.
- If you do have a lead service line, run the water for three to five minutes to flush water from both the interior building plumbing and the lead service line.
- Additional flushing may be required for homes that have been vacant or have a longer service line.

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 levels.

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. 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 exposure.

6. Test your water for lead. If you are interested in testing your water for lead, you may contact us at the number below or you may test water yourself using a lab certified for lead analysis.

7. Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.

Faucets, fittings, and valves may contribute lead to drinking water unless they have been replaced since 2013. Any new connecting plumbing and fittings should meet the 2014 lead-free definition. If you replace your faucet, buy a new one that meets the 2014 lead-free definition. Visit the National Sanitation Foundation web site at www.nsf.org to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

What Happened? What is Being Done?

Every three years, the City of Hamtramck conducts testing of the tap water in the homes for lead and copper. Per the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), samples are collected from homes that are likely to have lead service lines or copper plumbing with lead solder. Test results showed samples over the Action Level for lead in two homes.

The City of Hamtramck will conduct additional monitoring of the water system. In 2019, we will be collecting and testing sixty (60) samples every six months. The City will work with MDEQ to determine any corrective actions that are necessary to reduce corrosion in household plumbing.

Lead can enter drinking water when in contact with pipes, solder, home/building interior plumbing, fittings and fixtures that contain lead. The City of Hamtramck purchases its water from GLWA; GLWA employs corrosion control to reduce lead leaching into drinking water.

Homes with lead service lines have an increased risk of having high lead levels in drinking water. The City of Hamtramck has lead service lines and will be removing lead lines from its distribution system over a period of time.

For More Information

Call us at (313) 800-5201, or via e-mail at rjohnson@hamtramckcity.com, or visit our website at www.hamtramck.us. 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.