

What can I do about lead in my drinking water?



Be prepared to talk about the risks of lead in drinking water

- Water is the only lead exposure pathway intended for human consumption; water is necessary for survival.
- There is no safe level of lead exposure. Lead is a poison – a potent and irreversible neurotoxin.
- The time to address lead in water is when lead is detected in the environment, not when lead is detected in children. This is referred to as primary prevention.
- Lead in water sampling has a lot of variability. One low sample does not mean there is no lead in the water.
- Corrosion control reduces but does not prevent exposure to lead in water.
- Routine blood lead testing of toddlers is designed to detect exposure from lead paint and dust, not water.
- The populations most vulnerable to lead in water, pregnant women and formula fed infants, are not tested for lead exposure.
- Lead poisoning household investigations rarely include water sampling, although it is becoming more common.
- The homes with lead paint and lead dust are typically the homes that also have more lead in the plumbing.

Learn More:

- <http://graham.umich.edu/project/revised-lead-and-copper-rule>
- https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3313_3675_76638-490556--,00.html
- <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>

Take Action in Your Home and Community:

- (In Michigan) Attend public meetings of the Statewide Drinking Water Advisory Council or your local Water System Advisory Council
- Check for a lead service line in your home
- Take actions to reduce your exposure to lead in water at your home
- Tell your friends and neighbors how to check for a lead service line and reduce their exposure to lead in water
- Read your Annual Water Quality Report



Call your water utility and ask questions about your home:

- 1** Is my service line made of lead, copper, galvanized steel, or plastic? How do you know?
- 2** I would like to collect Lead and Copper Rule samples at my house. What do I need to do to participate?
- 3** How can I help you develop an accurate service line materials inventory?



▲ Replace lead service lines in Flint, Michigan.

Ask questions when your water utility or local decision makers hold open meetings

- 1** How many lead service lines do we have in our community? What records and research do you have to support your estimates?
- 2** What are your plans for identifying unknown lead service lines?
- 3** How are you notifying customers if they have a lead service line?
- 4** What are your lead service line replacement plans?
- 5** How many partial lead service line replacements have you done in the past year? How did you notify those homes?
- 6** What do you do to inform customers about the risks of partial lead service line replacements? What do you do to avoid partial lead service line replacements?
- 7** How many Lead and Copper Rule samples have been collected at homes known to have a lead service line?
- 8** What is the range of lead levels that you have detected at homes where you've conducted sampling?
- 9** Do you resample the homes with the highest lead levels every compliance sampling period?
- 10** Have you ever collected sequential samples from lead service line homes? What were the results?
- 11** What are you doing to find homes for compliance sampling this year?
- 12** Do you collect water samples and check for lead service lines when you investigate homes where children with elevated blood lead levels live?
- 13** Do you provide water filters for families with elevated blood lead levels? At lead service line homes?

