

LEAD *The most common source of lead in tap water is the plumbing in your home*

Have lead pipes, fixtures or solder?

BEFORE USING WATER FOR DRINKING OR COOKING:

If water goes unused for more than 6 hours, run water for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before use.

Minimizing your exposure

You cannot see, smell or taste lead, and boiling water will not remove lead. Although our water is treated to minimize the risk of lead, you can reduce your household's exposure to lead in drinking water by following these simple steps:

- **Flush your tap before drinking or cooking with water, if the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours.** The longer the water lies dormant in your home's plumbing, the more lead it might contain. Flush your tap with cold water for 30 seconds to two minutes before using. To conserve water, catch the running water and use it to water your plants.
- **Try not to cook with or drink water from the hot water faucet.** Hot water has the potential to contain more lead than cold water. When you need hot water, heat cold water on the stove or in the microwave.
- **Clean faucet aerators.** Routinely remove and clean all faucet aerators.
- **Remove loose solder and debris from plumbing.** In newly-constructed homes or homes in which the plumbing was recently replaced, remove the strainers from each faucet and run the water for 3 to 5 minutes. When replacing or working on pipes, be sure to use lead-free materials.
- **Look for the "Lead Free" label.** When replacing or installing fixtures, look for the "lead free" label.
- **See information on page 2 related to home treatment devices.**

The City of Freeport's Water & Sewer Department regularly tests for lead in drinking water.

Although these tests indicate that lead is not an issue in the treated water leaving our facility, lead and/or copper levels in some homes and businesses might be detected due to customer use of lead pipes, lead solder and molded metal faucets in household plumbing.

Health effects associated with high levels of lead

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets standards related to lead in drinking water. Lead levels that exceed these standards could cause serious damage to the brain, kidneys, nervous system and red blood cells. The greatest risk, even with short-term exposure, is to young children and pregnant women.

For more information:

City of Freeport, IL Water & Sewer Department: 815.233.1686

M-F, 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. or online:

www.ci.freeport.il.us/departments/water_sewer.htm



www.cityoffreeport.org

City Contact:

Tom Kopanski

Director of Utility Operations

815.233.1686

utilitydirector@cityoffreeport.org

ASSESSING YOUR EXPOSURE TO LEAD:

Lead levels in drinking water are more likely to be higher if:

- Your home or water system has lead pipes or has a lead service line
- A partial replacement of the lead service lines serving your home is performed
- Your home has copper pipes with lead solder
- Your home was built before 1986 AND
- You have soft or acidic water
- Water sits in the pipes for several hours

Getting your water tested for lead: the City of Freeport does not provide testing for lead for individual customers who request it. Customers can choose to have their water tested at their cost at a certified laboratory.

For more information

If you are still concerned about elevated levels and want to find out where you can have your water tested by a certified laboratory:

- **Contact EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act Hotline: 1-800-426-4791**
- **Visit Illinois EPA online at www.epa.illinois.gov**

FREQUENTLY ASKED Q & A

Is lead in water regulated and does the City of Freeport comply with standards?

Yes and yes. The EPA's lead standard is an action level that requires treatment modifications if lead test results exceed 15 parts per billion (ppb) in more than 10 percent of first draw samples taken from household taps.

The City of Freeport Water & Sewer Department regularly tests for lead at the end of its treatment process. Testing has shown that lead is not an issue in the water exiting any of our water treatment facilities. We also conduct tests in our distribution system in accordance with the EPA regulatory requirements. For more information on your system, visit cityoffreeport.org to view the latest consumer confidence report.

Does that mean I do not have lead in my water?

Not necessarily. You might have lead in your drinking water if your household plumbing system has lead pipes or if lead solder was used in the joints of copper pipes.

Homes built before 1930 are more likely to have lead plumbing systems. Lead pipes are dull grey in color and scratch easily revealing a shiny surface. Lead solder used to join copper pipes is a silver or grey color. If your house was built before January 1986, you are more likely to have lead-soldered joints. If you do, the chance of the lead leaching into your drinking water is greater when water has been standing in the pipes for many hours, overnight, for example.

Lead kits that test for the presence of lead in solder are available at some hardware stores.

Should I flush my faucets every morning before using it to drink or use for food prep?

Yes, see Minimizing Your Exposure.

How can I tell if my water contains too much lead?

You can have your water tested for lead. Since you cannot see, taste or smell lead dissolved in water, testing is the only sure way of knowing.

Do I need a home treatment device for lead?

The need for a home treatment device is a customer-specific decision. Certain home treatment devices, such as water softeners for example, might increase lead levels in your water.

Always consult the device manufacturer for information on treatment device maintenance and potential impacts to your drinking water or household plumbing.

NSF International created a Consumer Guide to NSF Certified Lead Filtration Devices for Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water. Visit www.nsf.org/info/leadfiltrationguide for more information.

Will electrical grounding increase my lead levels?

Possibly. If grounding wires from electrical systems are attached to household plumbing, corrosion and lead exposure may be greater. Customers can choose to pay to have an electrician check the house wiring.

KEEPING THE LEAD OUT OF FREEPORT TAP WATER

The unfortunate circumstances in Flint, Michigan and other communities across the country have created concern regarding tap water safety. The potential presence of lead in drinking water is a very serious health concern. Freeport residents can rest assured our water supply staff is committed to keeping lead out of the drinking water in our community. Freeport's public water supply has a very proactive lead/copper monitoring program. This article will provide an overview of this program and provide additional actions you can take to provide enhanced protection against any potential lead exposure via tap water.

About Lead

Lead (Pb) is a bluish-gray, silvery metal, which is a harmful neurotoxin if ingested or inhaled. Interestingly, mankind has used lead for a variety of purposes including cosmetics, jewelry, ammunition, paint, plumbing, plastics production and as a gasoline additive. Fortunately, the significant health hazards associated with lead have been recognized and its use progressively banned in the U.S. since the 1970's. These efforts have resulted in a dramatic decrease in lead exposure pathways over the last thirty years, which is a drastic improvement from the world baby-boomers grew up in.

How Does Lead Get In Tap Water?

In regard to tap water, it is important to understand that lead does not come from the source water nor is it removed in the water treatment process. Lead can enter tap water, if the tap water is corrosive and comes in contact with older piping and/or plumbing fixtures that contain lead. Lead water service pipes are considered to be primary potential sources of lead in tap water. Water service pipes are the buried pipes that connect a building's plumbing system to the City water mains. Other potential sources of lead in tap water include lead-based "50/50" solder used to join copper pipes and brass/bronze plumbing fixtures manufactured before 2014.

Keeping The Lead Out of Freeport Tap Water

- Freeport uses both Larson and Langelier indices to monitor finished water quality, allowing for refined water treatment adjustments in regard to corrosion control.
- Freeport has been on reduced compliance monitoring since 2007 for lead and copper.
- Our lead and copper monitoring program involves testing of samples taken from homes known to have lead service lines and/or copper pipe joined with the "50/50" lead solder.

Like nearly all older public water supply systems in our country, there are still some lead water services pipes in Freeport's water distribution system. Of the 11,000+ water service pipes in our system, several thousand are known or thought to be lead pipe. Although monitoring has demonstrated our corrosion control program is effective, Freeport is systematically replacing the remaining lead service pipes in conjunction with our water main replacement program and other system maintenance activities. The City currently plans to spend more than \$1 million per year on the water main replacement program. Also noteworthy is the fact that all of the water meters that were installed in Freeport's 2012-2014 water meter replacement project have lead-free brass bodies.

How to Further Reduce Tap Water Lead Exposure in Your Home

There are several simple but proven methods you can use to further reduce potential exposure to lead in drinking water:

- 1) Flush the faucet for a couple minutes before consuming the water, if the faucet has not been used for six hours or longer. The longer water sits stagnant in a piping system, the more likely metal ions can leach into the water. Flushing helps ensure you are drinking fresh, rather than stagnant water.
- 2) Do not consume water from the hot water faucet. Hot water promotes lead leaching. Water from your water heater may contain lead and other impurities that have accrued in the tank.
- 3) Remove and clean faucet aerators on a periodic basis, as undesirable particles and sediment may collect in these over time.
- 4) When repairing and replacing plumbing, do not use "50/50" lead solder for plumbing repairs and ensure any new plumbing fixtures are lead-free.

Our Commitment To You

The City is committed to providing its residents with a continuous supply of safe, high quality water, and we take this job seriously. We trust you found this article to be informative and beneficial. Please feel free to contact us if you require any additional information.

Director of Utility Operations: Thomas A. Kopanski – 815.233.1686
Email: utilitydirector@cityoffreeport.org