NHDES-W-03-041

Lead Public Education Notice
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER.

VILLAGE DISTRICT OF EASTMAN

The Village District of Eastman 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. 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 heavy, soft, gray, metallic element that is easily bent and shaped. Because of these qualities, lead was widely used in plumbing from service lines to kitchen and bathroom fixtures. Lead is found throughout the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, certain spices, some types of pottery, porcelain and pewter, and water. Ingestion or inhalation of lead poses a significant health risk, especially to children and pregnant women. Lead builds up in the body and causes damage to the brain, red blood cells, and kidneys. Even low levels of lead can slow the mental and physical development of children. Very small children are easily exposed to lead dust, paint chips, or contaminated soil in your home or in the playground.

Lead enters drinking water as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away of materials containing lead in the water distribution piping and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe through 1986, leaded brass and chrome-plated brass faucets available until January 4, 2014, and in some cases, lead gooseneck connectors and service lines used through the 1950s to connect your house to the water main.

Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free,'' may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows pipes, fittings, and fixtures with up to 0.25% weighted average of lead to be identified as "lead-free."

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can significantly increase total lead exposure, particularly for infants who drink baby formula and concentrated juices mixed with water. The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20% or more of an infant's total exposure to lead. **THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF LEAD.**

IMPORTANT PRECAUTIONS TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

Despite our best efforts to control water corrosivity and remove lead from the water supply, lead levels in some homes or buildings can be high. Steps you can take to protect your family include the following:

- **Flush your tap every morning or after extended periods of non-use for 30 seconds or until the water runs cold.** The longer the water resides in your home's plumbing, the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap ensures that you use fresh water that has not been in contact with lead in your plumbing.

- **Use cold water only for cooking, drinking, and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap as hot water leaches lead more quickly. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold-water tap and heat it. Keep in mind that boiling water does not reduce lead levels in the water.

- **Test your tap water**. Contact a state-accredited laboratory from the link immediately below to order a water sample bottle. Lead has no color, smell, or odor so the only way to know if you have lead is to test. **NH Accredited Laboratories for Lead Testing**

ADDITIONAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

The above steps will help to reduce the lead concentrations in your drinking water. However, if a water test indicates that the drinking water from your home has lead levels of **5 ppb** or higher, additional measures to take may include:

- **Install a new faucet.** Any faucet purchased after January 4, 2014 is required to have no more than 0.25% lead content, down from 8% prior to 2014. After you perform any plumbing work in your home, all faucets must be flushed for 1 to 2 hours to dislodge any particulate lead disturbed by the work, and retested to verify that levels have been reduced.

- **Check if you have a Lead Service Line.** If your home and water service connection were built before 1950, find and examine the pipe where the water enters your home. Use a coin or key to scratch the pipe, then place a magnet on it. If the pipe is shiny and does NOT attract the magnet, IT IS LIKELY LEAD. Call your water supplier and ask for help to have your full service line replaced as soon as practical. Partial service line replacement is not acceptable as it causes a temporary spike in lead levels. Until the line is replaced, install a lead-certified filter.

- **Purchase bottled water for all drinking and cooking until lead sources are addressed.** Bathing and showering is fine as long as no water is swallowed.

- **Install a point of use lead filter certified under NSF 53 – Health Effects.** Follow manufacturer's instructions for installation and filter replacement, and test before and after the filter until all lead sources have been removed. Point of use devices are limited in that each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected, and all require periodic maintenance and replacement.

NSF
National Sanitation Foundation
Certified Products

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead. New Hampshire is a universal testing state where all infants must be tested for lead TWICE, at 1 year old and again at 2 years old. Both tests are critically important to identify and prevent lead exposure to infants.

RESOURCES

NH Health and Human Services Healthy Homes - https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/bchs/clpp/

NHDES Application to Identify Lead Pipes - https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeB7xcJ4E4ZmuJDsmLzcxwETN6ADbYO_c5j2h4DLuzBJWyqgA/viewform

NHDES Lead in Drinking Water - https://des.nh.gov/water/drinking-water/lead-drinking-water dwmonitoring@des.nh.gov or 603-271-2516

EPA Lead page - https://www.epa.gov/lead

National Sanitation Foundation - http://www.nsf.org/

Lead Free Kids NH - http://leadfreekidsnh.org/

INFORMATION FROM YOUR WATER SYSTEM

In the last round of required sampling for 2023, two of the twenty samples submitted for lead and copper testing showed elevated lead amounts. The maximum contaminant level (MCL) for lead is .015 mg/L, or parts per million. These two sites tested at .0158 mg/L and .0161 mg/L.

Historically, lead content in individual service lines has ranged from .004 mg/L to .008 mg/L, well under the MCL of .015 mg/L. Because of the slight increase in the 2023 sampling, additional sampling for lead and copper will be required through 2024. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) determines the sites to be sampled; those residences will be receiving sampling notices and instructions toward the end of January 2024.

Additionally, the Environmental Protection Agency is expanding the Lead and Copper Rule to include inventories of service lines within a public water system. We have been working with a DES-assigned consultant to determine the best way to establish this inventory, and how to collect the necessary data. Customers will be able to submit information on their service line directly to the VDE using an electronic survey, which will be available spring 2024. The deadline for submitting the LCR inventory is October 16, 2024.

For more information, call us at 603-863-6512, or visit our website at www.eastmanh2o.org. As more information is available from DES and EPA on the revised Lead and Copper Rule, and the increased sampling requirements, it will be posted to the website. The inventory survey will also be available. 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 healthcare provider.

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