

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Tri-County Conservancy District tests for levels of lead in its water supply every three (3) years. During a routine test in 2018, the District found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in a few homes. 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 the child's brain development.

Sources of lead

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of infants who drink baby formula and concentrated juices that are mixed with water. The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome plated brass faucets, and in some cases pipes made of lead that connect houses and buildings to water mains (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2 percent lead and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes, and other plumbing material to 8.0 percent.

When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning or later in the afternoon if the water has not been used all day, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

Steps you can take in the Home (or anywhere else) to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water

Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer the water resides in the plumbing, the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap means running cold water faucet until water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15-30 seconds. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of your home's plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking water. To conserve water, fill a couple of bottles for drinking water after flushing the tap, and whenever possible use the flush water to wash dishes or water plants.

Try not to cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Hot water can dissolve lead more quickly than cold water. If you need hot water, draw it from the cold tap and then heat it. Boiling water for drinking and cooking.

The steps described above will reduce the lead concentration in you drinking water. However, if you are still concerned, you may wish to purchase bottled water for drinking and cooking.

For more information, call us at 317-856-0224 or visit our website www.tricountyconservancy-in.gov For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home or building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/lead or contact your health care provider who can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead. State and local government agencies that can be contacted include:

- Tess Cutshaw, District Manager at 317-856-0224 can provide you with information about your facility's water supply.
- Indiana State Department of Health at 31-233-1250 or the Morgan County Health Department 765-342-6621 can provide you with information about the health effects of lead.

Customers can get their water tested for lead by contacting a laboratory certified to test for lead in drinking water. A list of those laboratories is available online at www.in.gov/isdh/22421.htm

You are receiving this public education notice due to Tri-County Conservancy District's 2018 testing which showed two out of ten participants with elevated levels of lead in their drinking water. These two participants were slightly over the 15 parts per billion action level, reporting 16.9 parts per billion and 17.2 parts per billion. Tri-County Conservancy District is working with IDEM and Citizens Energy Group with additional testing to ensure that we continue to provide safe drinking water. If you would be interested in participating in our lead copper sampling program, (and do not have a water softener), please contact TCCD at 317-856-0224.