

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

CLARKSBURG WATER BOARD, CLARKSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA

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What happened?

The Clarksburg Water Board (CWB) found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. These elevated levels were discovered in three homes of children diagnosed with elevated blood lead levels within Clarksburg's water system. Upon lab sampling confirmation, the CWB responded and exposed these utility service lines. It was determined that these lines were lead and the CWB immediately removed these lines and installed new lead-free lines from the main line to the water meter setting. Lead lines are not uncommon to water systems in West Virginia and throughout the United States. For many years, per United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) guidelines, the CWB has been conducting regular lead/copper testing throughout 30 different locations in the city of Clarksburg. These tests could indicate lead in customer's internal plumbing, but may not indicate whether they have a lead service line. In either case, test results have never revealed elevated action levels for lead in Clarksburg's water. The lead action level is exceeded if the concentration of lead in more than 10 percent of tap water samples collected during any monitoring period conducted in accordance with §141.86 is greater than 0.015 mg/L (i.e., if the "90th percentile" lead level is greater than 0.015 mg/L). 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 common metal found in the environment. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass 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). Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water.

Steps to reduce their exposure to lead in drinking water:

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** Flush for two (2) minutes, if your water has been sitting for several hours
- **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Lead dissolves more easily into hot water.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- **Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.**
- **Test your water for lead.** Call us to find out how to get your water tested for lead.
- **Get your child's blood 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.
- **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures containing lead.** Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. Visit the NSF Web site at www.nsf.org to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

What is being done?

The CWB has implemented an aggressive water testing program throughout their system that will primarily focus on the three areas of concern as well as areas that contain older water mains as well as neighborhoods that have older structures. If a customer's water sample result is above the action level established by the EPA, the CWB will provide that customer with the lab results, lead education information, and a point of use filter system. The CWB will expose both the utility service and customer service lines. The CWB will submit the results of their findings to the customer. If the utility service line contains leads, the CWB will place it on a priority replacement list for future replacement. If the customer's service line (customer's side of the water meter) contains lead, the CWB will provide the customer with replacement options.

Questions:

For information about water quality, please contact Water Treatment Superintendent Robert Davis at (304) 623-8121. All media inquiries, please contact President Paul Howe at (304) 623-3711. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's web site at <http://www.epa.gov/lead> or contact your health care provider.

This notice is being sent to you by the Clarksburg Water Board, as required by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.