

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

**ESTE INFORME CONTIENE INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE ACERCA DE SU AGUA POTABLE. HAGA QUE ALGUIEN LO TRADUZCA PARA USTED, O HABLE CON ALGUIEN QUE LO ENTIENDA.**

The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) has found elevated levels of lead in tap water samples in some homes (see reverse for detailed summary of sample results). Elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems. **Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.**

A lead level of 22 parts per billion (ppb) was reported at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for compliance samples collected during June, 2016. This lead value is greater than the action level of 15 ppb.

### **What does this mean?**

Under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set the action level for lead in drinking water at 15 ppb. This means utilities must ensure that water from the customer's tap does not exceed this level in at least 90 percent of the homes sampled (represents the 90th percentile value). An action level exceedance is not a violation but triggers other requirements that include water quality parameter monitoring, corrosion control treatment, source water monitoring, public education, and lead service line replacement.

Lead is rarely found in the source of a public water supply. Rather, it enters tap water through the corrosion of a home's service line or plumbing materials.

### **What happened? What was done?**

Under an Administrative Order dated April 25, 2016, issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), PWSA is required to conduct two rounds of compliance samples for lead and copper, one by June 30, 2016 and one by December 31, 2016. For the first round, PWSA pre-selected 100 residential sites for tap samples from homes that have lead service lines or plumbing (Tier 1 sites). The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile lead level for these homes is 22 ppb, which exceeds the EPA 15 ppb action level. Results of the samples are summarized on the reverse side of this notice.

PWSA has already started water quality parameter monitoring, source water monitoring, public education, and lead service line replacement and is evaluating the effectiveness of corrosion control treatment and will continue these measures. PWSA will also continue to cooperate with DEP and the Allegheny County Health Department.

### **What are the health effects of lead?**

EPA provides for the following notice in 40 C.F.R. § 141.85:

*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.

Additional sources of information on health effects of lead, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are listed below.

### **What should I do?**

- **If you have specific health concerns, consult your health care provider.**
- **Steps you can take to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water:**
  - **Run your water to flush out lead.** If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes lead-containing water from the pipes.

- **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- **Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.** NSF Consumer Affairs Office has developed a NSF Water Fact Kit for consumers that includes specific information about lead in drinking water at: [www.nsf.org/consumer/newsroom/ket water.asp](http://www.nsf.org/consumer/newsroom/ket%20water.asp).
- **If you would like your tap water tested for lead,** please contact the PWSA Lab at 412-782-7554.
- **Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.** There are lead check swabs that can detect lead on plumbing surfaces such as solder and pipes. These swabs can be purchased at plumbing and home improvement stores. Consider having lead-containing pipes and fixtures replaced, or use the precautions listed above.
- **Contact PWSA if you believe your home has a lead service line.**

For more information, please visit [www.pgh2o.com](http://www.pgh2o.com) or contact the PWSA Lab at 412-782-7554.

*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*

This notice is being sent to you by The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority.

PWS ID#: 5020038

**For more information:**

Visit [www.pgh2o.com](http://www.pgh2o.com) or call us at 412-782-7554 to find out additional information on lead.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead:

- Visit EPA's website at: [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead),
- Visit DEP's website at: [www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/PublicDrinkingWater/Pages/Lead-in-Drinking-Water.aspx](http://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/PublicDrinkingWater/Pages/Lead-in-Drinking-Water.aspx)
- Visit the Centers for Disease Control's website at: [www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.htm),
- Visit the Allegheny County Health Department's website at [www.achd.net/lead](http://www.achd.net/lead),
- Call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or
- Contact your health care provider.

**Sample results:**

Results for the compliance sampling, analyzed by an independent, accredited laboratory and submitted to DEP, are as follows:

- 45 are non-detect for lead
- 15 are between 2.1 and 4.6 ppb (parts per billion)
- 7 are between 5 and 9.8 ppb
- 16 are between 10 and 14 ppb
- 6 are between 16 and 19 ppb
- 7 are between 22 and 38 ppb
- 4 are between 50 and 75 ppb

In addition to the compliance sampling, PWSA has also been conducting analyses of tap samples requested by customers. These samples are not limited to homes that have, or are expected to have, lead service lines or plumbing. Results of these samples are available at [www.pgh2o.com](http://www.pgh2o.com).

Date distributed: 7/25/2016