

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 20 parts per billion (ppb) was reported at the 90th percentile for compliance samples collected during the monitoring period of July 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018. 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?

Due to elevated levels of lead in water detected in some homes, PWSA is required by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to conduct lead and copper compliance sampling every six months. Samples are taken from homes that have lead service lines or lead in their internal plumbing. For the second half of 2018, PWSA received 161 samples from 161 homes. All 161 samples were included in PWSA's 90th percentile calculation. The 90th percentile lead level for these homes is 20 ppb, which exceeds the EPA 15 ppb action level. Results of the samples are summarized on the reverse side of this notice. The next round of compliance samples will be completed by June 30, 2019.

PWSA adds anti-corrosion chemicals at the treatment plant to help to address this problem. A comprehensive water quality study determined that using orthophosphate instead of the current treatment will improve corrosion control and reduce lead levels. PWSA is in the process of installing the equipment necessary to add orthophosphate and expects it to be applied in early spring 2019. PWSA will also continue to (1) test tap water for lead, (2) educate customers about lead, and (3) replace any lead service lines it owns and will work with customers who want to replace lead service lines that they own. Since corrosion happens in service lines and interior plumbing that contain lead, water providers cannot take care of the entire problem.

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 you haven't used your water for several hours, run your cold tap for at least one minute before cooking or drinking. Homes with longer lead water service lines may require flushing for a longer period of time.

- **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.** The NSF Water Fact Kit includes specific information about filtering lead in drinking water at: www.nsf.org. Coupons for NSF-certified filters can be found at lead.pgh2o.com/resources/lead-filters-and-other-products.
- **If you would like your tap water tested for lead,** You can request a kit at pgh2o.com/leadform or call 412.255.8987. You may also contact private labs for testing. More information on testing can be found at our website at lead.pgh2o.com.
- **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 decide to replace your lead service line.** Depending on household income, customers may be eligible to have their lead water service line replaced at no cost.
- **Get your child's blood tested.** If you think your child may have been exposed to lead, talk to your doctor about testing your child. Allegheny County requires all children to be tested for lead exposure at approximately 9-12 months, and again at 24 months.

For more information, please visit lead.pgh2o.com or contact the PWSA at 412-255-8987.

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 lead.pgh2o.com or call us at 412-255-8987 to find out additional information on lead.

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

- EPA's website at: www.epa.gov/lead,
- DEP's website at: www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/PublicDrinkingWater/Pages/Lead-in-Drinking-Water.aspx
- Centers for Disease Control's website at: www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.htm,
- Allegheny County Health Department's website at 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:

- 73 have a lead concentration of less than 5.0 ppb
- 51 are between 5.0 and 9.9 ppb
- 13 are between 10.0 and 14.9 ppb
- 6 are between 15.0 and 19.9 ppb
- 15 are between 20 and 49.9 ppb
- 3 are higher than 50 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.

Date distributed: 1/22/2019