

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Lead Water Sample Results

Pleasant Valley Community Water System

The Pleasant Valley community water system 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 lower 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.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

1. Run your water to flush out lead: If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 15 to 30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking.
2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula: Lead from the plumbing dissolves more easily into hot water.
3. Remove debris from faucet strainers: Remove the faucet strainers/screens from all taps, rinse off the strainer, and run the water from 3 to 5 minutes. Thereafter, periodically remove the strainers and flush out any debris that may have accumulated over time.
4. Identify and replace lead solder: Lead solder (which was commonly used to join copper pipes prior to 1988) appears dull gray and when scratched with a key becomes shiny. A licensed plumber should be able to help with lead solder identification and replacement (if applicable).
5. Have an electrician check the grounding in your home: Contact a licensed electrician to check if the grounding wires from the electrical system are connected to your water pipes (which may increase the corrosion of metals in the plumbing). If so, check if wires can be grounded elsewhere.
6. Look for alternative sources (e.g. bottled water) or treatment of water if lead levels are elevated. If purchasing a water filter, be sure that the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters.
7. Get your child 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.

***Please note that boiling your water will not reduce the lead levels.*

WHAT HAPPENED

During routine copper and lead testing, July through September 2016, the Pleasant Valley water system discovered some of the older homes with copper pipes may have elevated levels of lead present in their drinking water. The maximum contaminate level goal (MCLG) for lead is zero and the action level is 15 parts per billion (or .015 parts per million). The MCLG is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. Prior years, calcium carbonate levels (hardness) assisted in maintaining low lead results in the older homes within the area by allowing a layer of calcium scaling on the pipe walls. During an upgrade, the Pleasant Valley water treatment facility installed water softeners to assist the newly installed nitrate removal tanks to work properly, but in turn it also removed the calcium scaling.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT

Currently we are focusing on increasing pH and slightly increasing hardness, which will assist in preventing the ability of lead leaching into the water. Follow up testing is currently being done and you will be informed of any further concerns.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information, please contact the Pleasant Valley Community Water System at 410-386-2164. For additional 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 health care provider.