

PUBLIC EDUCATION MATERIAL AND SUPPLEMENTAL MONITORING REQUIREMENTS FOR LEAD & COPPER - VILLAGE OF TARRYTOWN

Introduction:

The Environmental Protection Agency has completed an audit of the Village of Tarrytown Water System for the period from 2013 through 2015 and has ordered the Village to revise the Public Education material that was distributed in March of 2014. This material was distributed as a result of a Lead Action level exceedance in the Tarrytown Water Distribution System that occurred in 2013 and the educational material distributed by the Village lacked some of the required mandatory language.

The information in this material contains the mandatory language and is being re-circulated to comply with the Department of Environmental Protection Agency's rules and regulations, 40 CFR 141.85 (a), NYCRR 5-141.44, and the notification for the Public Education violation NYCRR 5-1.78.

The New York State Health Department and the Village of Tarrytown are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes in the community have lead levels above the action level, established by the US Environmental Protection Agency, of 15 parts per billion, or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water. Under the State Sanitary Code, a corrosion control system to minimize lead in your drinking water has been installed by the Village. If your home/business has a service line that contributes lead concentrations of more than 15 parts per billion, the Village is required to replace the service line from the water main to the curb stop. You are responsible for replacing the service line from the curb stop to your home/business. If you have any questions about how the Village is carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation, please give the Village a call at 914-631-0356. This letter explains the simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

Important information about Lead in your Drinking Water: The Village of Tarrytown 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 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 throughout the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil and some plumbing material. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, porcelain, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the work place and exposure from hobbies (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and in some children metal jewelry. Children at play often come into contact with sources of lead contamination such as dirt and dust that rarely affect an adult. In order to address this possible contamination, it is important to wash children's hands and toys often and try to make sure they only put food into their mouths.

EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water can receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free" may contribute lead to drinking water.

Sources of Lead in drinking water:

Although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, lead in drinking water can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of infants who drink baby formulas and concentrated juices that are mixed with water. It is estimated that drinking water can make up to 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead. The sources of Lead Contamination are:

i. Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily through the home/building plumbing materials, water service laterals, and distribution mains primarily because of 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 at times, pipes made of lead that connect your house to the water main (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead and restricted the lead content to 8% in faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials. In 2011, Congress passed the Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act (RLDWA) revising the definition of lead free by lowering the maximum lead content of the wetted surfaces of plumbing products (such as pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings and fixtures) from 8% to a weighted average of 0.25%, establishing a statutory method for the calculation of lead content and eliminating the requirement that lead free products be in compliance with voluntary standards established in accordance with SDWA 1417(e) for leaching of lead from new plumbing fittings and fixtures.

ii. 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 after returning from work or school, can contain high levels of lead.

Steps you can take in the home to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water:

If a water test shows that the drinking water drawn from a tap in your home contains lead levels above 15 parts per billion, then you should take the following precautions. However, there is no harm taking these actions even if your home contains lead levels below 15 parts per billion.

1. Running the water to flush out the lead:

Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in a faucet has stood for more than six hours. The longer water sits in your home's plumbing, the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15 to 30 seconds. If your house has a lead service line to the water main, you may have to flush the water for a longer period of time, perhaps upwards of one minute before drinking the water. 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 or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your family's health. It usually uses less than one or two gallons of water per day. To conserve water, fill a couple of bottles for drinking water after flushing the tap, and whenever possible use the first flush water to wash dishes, watering plants, or other purposes that do not involve cooking and drinking. If you live in a high rise building, letting the water flow before

using it may not be effective to reduce your risk from lead because the plumbing systems have more and sometimes larger pipes than smaller buildings. Ask your landlord for help in locating the source of lead and for advice on reducing the lead level.

2. Concerns with using hot water from taps. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula

Do not 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 water from the cold water tap and heat it on the stove. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.

3. Do not boil water to remove lead

Please be informed that boiling water does not reduce the lead levels in water.

4. The steps described above will reduce the lead concentrations in your drinking water. However, if a water test shows that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations more than 15 parts per billion after flushing, you may want to take the following additional measures:

Purchase or lease a home water treatment device to remove lead. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org on information on performance standards for water filters. There are faucet-based home treatment devices, such as activated carbon filters, that are limited because each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected and all of the devices require periodic maintenance and replacement. Whole house devices such as reverse osmosis systems or distillers can effectively remove lead from your drinking water and do not have the limitations of faucet-based systems. However, all lead reduction claims should be investigated. Be sure to check the actual performance of a specific home treatment device before and after installing the unit.

Purchase bottled water for drinking and cooking that is certified by the New York State Department of Health.

5. Test your water for lead

Despite the installation of the corrosion control system by the Village, lead levels in some homes or buildings can be high. If you are interested in finding out whether you need to take action in your own home, you can have your drinking water tested to determine if it contains excessive concentrations of lead. If you are concerned, testing the water is essential because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water. Some local approved environmental laboratories that provide this service are listed at the end of this document. For more information on having your water tested, please call 914-631-3668.

If a water test shows that the drinking water drawn from a tap in your home contains lead levels above 15 parts per billion, then you should take the following precautions. However, there is no harm taking these actions even if your home contains lead levels below 15 parts per billion.

You can consult a variety of sources for additional information. Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead for your child and provide you with information about the health effects of lead. State and local government agencies that can be contacted include:

Contact Information:

Westchester County Department of Health (914-831-5000) can provide you with information about your community's water supply, a list of local certified laboratories, plus information about the health effects of lead and how to have your child's blood tested for lead.

The Tarrytown Building Department (914-631-3668) can provide you with information about building and plumbing permit records that may contain the names of plumbing contractors that plumbed your home.

7. Identify and replace lead fixtures containing lead: Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as “lead-free” may contribute lead to drinking water. In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead and restricted the lead content to 8% in faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials. In 2011, Congress passed the Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act (RLDWA) revising the definition of lead free by lowering the maximum lead content of the wetted surfaces of plumbing products (such as pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings and fixtures) from 8% to a weighted average of 0.25%, establishing a statutory method for the calculation of lead content and eliminating the requirement that lead free products be in compliance with voluntary standards established in accordance with SDWA 1417(e) for leaching of lead from new plumbing fittings and fixtures. Visit www.nsf.org to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

Other options consumers can take to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water:

Remove loose lead solder and debris from the plumbing by removing the faucet strainers from all taps and running the water from 3 to 5 minutes. Thereafter, periodically remove the strainers and flush out any debris that has accumulated.

If your building copper pipes are joined with lead solder that has been installed illegally since it was banned in 1986, notify the plumber who did the work and request replacement of the lead solder with lead-free solder. Also, notify the local office of the health department (914-813-5000) and the Tarrytown Department of Public Works (914-631-0356) about the violation. Lead solder looks dull gray, and when scratched with a metal object looks shiny.

Determine whether the service line that connects your home or apartment to the water main is made of lead. The public water system that delivers water to your home may have records of the materials located in the distribution system. If they do not have any records concerning your service line, try to contact the plumbing contractor who installed the service line. You can usually identify the plumbing contractor by checking with the Village Building Department at 914-631-3668, since the Building Department issues and keeps records of plumbing permits. If the plumbing contractor can't be located, hire a licensed plumber to determine if the service line is made of lead. A licensed plumber can also check to see if your home's plumbing contains lead solder, lead pipes or pipe fittings that contain lead.

If you have a lead service line that connects your dwelling to the water main and it contributes more than 15 parts per billion of lead to your drinking water after our comprehensive treatment program is in place, we are required to replace the line. If the service line is only partially controlled by the Village, we are required to replace the portion of the line under our control and we are required to provide you with information on how to replace your portion of the lead service line. We are also required to offer to replace your portion of the service line at your expense and take a follow-up tap sample within 14 days of the replacement. Acceptable service line replacement alternatives include copper, steel, iron, and plastic pipes.

Have an electrician check your wiring. If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes, then corrosion within your plumbing system may be greater. Check with the electrician or your local electrical code to determine if your wiring can be grounded elsewhere. DO NOT attempt to change the wiring yourself because improper grounding can cause electrical shock and fire hazards.

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Steps taken by the Village to control lead in drinking water:

The Village has implemented corrosion treatment and is working with the Health Department to optimize treatment. Treatment chemical is added in the distribution water to control lead and copper levels within the allowable regulatory limits.

The Village has an active water distribution system rehabilitation program. As part of the rehabilitation work, the Village of Tarrytown has been replacing water mains and clean & line other water distribution mains, and installs new building service connections from the main to the curb stops (service laterals owned by the Village). To date the Village of Tarrytown has completed six (6) rehabilitation projects and has upgraded several thousand feet of distribution system pipes and connected service laterals.

The Village has completed building service connection material evaluation study and has identified building laterals which are assumed to have lead service lines. The Village will be using the results of the study in prioritizing future rehabilitation projects.

The following is a list of certified laboratories in your area that you can call to have your water tested for lead.

Westchester County Department of Labs and Research, 10 Dana Road, Valhalla, New York 10595 (914-231-1620).

Yorktown Medical Labs, 321 Kear Street #A, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598 (914-245-3203).

EnviroTest Laboratories, 315 Fullerton Avenue, Newburgh, NY 12550 (845-562-0890).

For more information, call us at 914 631-0356 or visit our Website at www.tarrytowngov.com.

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.