Important Information about Lead in Your Drinking Water

Note: To request this notice in a language other than English, please contact the City of Syracuse Department of Water at 315-448-8354.

The City of Syracuse Department of Water in the January-June 2024 sampling period 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

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The primary source of lead exposure for most children is lead-based paint. Other sources of lead exposure include lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the workplace (jobs that include house painting, plumbing, renovation, construction, auto repair, welding, electronics repair, jewelry or pottery repair) and exposure from certain hobbies (such as stained glass or pottery, fishing, making or shooting firearms and collecting lead or pewter figurines), as lead can be carried on clothing and shoes. Children's hands or their toys can come into contact with lead in paint, dust and soil. Therefore, washing children's hands and their toys will help reduce the potential for lead exposure from these sources.

Plumbing materials, including pipes, new brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows pipes, fittings, and fixtures with up to 0.25 percent weighted average of lead to be identified as "lead-free."

The City's water supply is sourced from Skaneateles Lake. The water leaves Skaneateles Lake and travels through the city's water mains and is free of lead. When water is in contact with pipes [or service lines] or plumbing that contains lead for several hours, the lead may enter the drinking water. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have lead pipes or lead solder.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce

1. ***Run your water to flush out lead.***



Before drinking, flush your home's pipes for several minutes by running the tap, taking a shower, doing laundry, or doing a load of dishes. The amount of time to run the water will depend on whether your home has a lead service line or not, and the length of the lead service line. Residents should contact their water utility for recommendations about flushing times in their community.

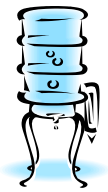
2. ***Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.***



Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily in hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.

3. ***Do not boil water to remove lead.*** Boiling water will not reduce lead.

4. ***Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.***



You may consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF at 1-800-NSF-8010 (1-800-673-8010) or visit: info.nsf.org/Certified/dwtu/listings_leadreduction.asp , for a consumer guide of approved water filters. In conjunction with flushing, properly operated filters are highly effective at reducing lead exposure. Be sure

to maintain and replace a filter device following the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality.

5. ***Replace your plumbing fixtures if they are found to contain lead.*** Plumbing materials including brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law previously allowed end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8 percent lead to be labeled as "lead-free." As of January 4, 2014, end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, fittings, and valves, must meet the new "lead-free" definition of having no more than 0.25 percent lead on a weighted average. Visit epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-06/how-to-id-lead-free-certified-drinking-water-products-epa_june-2024.pdf to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures and how to identify lead-free certification marks on new fixtures.

Should you test your water for lead?
If lead-containing plumbing materials are identified in your home, you may want to consider testing your water for lead to determine how much lead is in your drinking water. Call us at 315-448-8354 to find out how to get your water tested for lead. Alternatively, customers may arrange for their water to be tested by calling Life Science Laboratories, Inc. at 315-445-1105.

Should your child be tested for lead?
New York Public Health Law requires primary health care providers to screen each child for blood lead levels at one and two years of age as part of routine well-childcare. In addition, at each routine well-child visit, or at least annually if a child has not had routine well-child visits, primary health care providers assess each child who is at least six months of age, but under six years of age, for high lead exposure. Each child found to be at risk for high lead exposure is screened or referred for lead screening.

If your child has not had routine well-child visits (since the age of one year) and you are concerned about lead exposure to your child, contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.

What happened? What is being done?

The City of Syracuse Department of Water testing demonstrated elevated lead levels in drinking water at some homes during routine sampling for the New York State Department of Health during the first half of 2024. Errors occurred in the sampling program which may explain the elevated levels. In follow up sampling, results were found to be below the EPA's action level of concern. Under EPA requirements, water sampling will be repeated every six months.

The City of Syracuse Water Department treats drinking water with orthophosphate, a food-grade additive approved by the FDA and recognized by the EPA for reducing lead levels by coating lead service lines. The City continues to monitor water quality, actively replaces lead lines during projects, and is developing a plan to replace all 17,000 lead service lines ahead of the EPA's deadline.

Residents can contact the City of Syracuse Water Department for information on your home's lead service line. They can also visit syr.gov/Lead-Free-Syracuse to search the service line inventory map. Residents can also hire a certified plumber to inspect both the service line and other plumbing materials in your home.

For More Information

Call us at 315-448-8354 or visit our website at visit syr.gov/Lead-Free-Syracuse. For more information on lead in drinking water, contact your local health department at Onondaga County Department of Health Water Supply Division at 315-435-6600, email PHEng@ongov.net, or visit: onondaga.gov/health-env/lead/, or the New York State Department of Health directly by calling the toll-free number (within New York State) 1 800-458-1158, extension 27650, or out of state at (518) 402-7650, or by email at bpwsp@health.ny.gov. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Website at **epa.gov/lead**, or call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

Water System: City of Syracuse Department of Water
State Water System ID: #NY3304334
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