

- **Use Cold Water**–Begin with cold water for drinking, cooking or preparing baby formula, because hot water dissolves lead more quickly.

- **Filter the Water**–Many home water filters are effective at removing lead. If you purchase a filter, make sure it is certified for lead removal and that you maintain it properly. Find out more on filter certification at www.nsf.org.



Let's Get the Lead Out!

The surest way to protect against lead in water is to get the lead out altogether.

- **Replace lead service lines**
  If you have a lead service line, talk to a licensed plumber about getting it replaced. Contact your utility to see if there are payment options or rebate programs.

- **Replace other plumbing that contains lead**
  Hire a licensed plumber to look for and replace lead solder, fixtures or other potential sources of lead.



For More Information

There are a number of resources available for more information about lead, water filtration systems and other related issues.

CDC–Lead in Drinking Water–The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has information on lead's health effects and tips for protection from water and other common sources of exposure. www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead

Drinktap.org–A public service of the American Water Works Association, drinktap.org was created to provide people information about a variety of water-related issues, from water quality to conservation.

Epa.gov/lead–The federal agency responsible for the safety of America's drinking water, EPA hosts a comprehensive website that addresses all sources of lead in the home.

Nsf.org–NSF International provides consumer information about water filter capabilities, including claims to reduce lead. The NSF can also be reached at 800.NSF.8010.

American Water Works Association

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Lead

Keep Your Water Safe



LET'S GET THE LEAD OUT!



Is Lead in Your Plumbing?

Today, there's growing awareness that some homes have lead in water pipes, fixtures and plumbing. Lead presents health concerns for people of all ages and particularly for infants and young children. In children, low levels of exposure have been linked to learning disabilities, behavioral problems and other issues.

Where water meets lead

The water leaving the treatment plant and traveling through water mains is almost always free of lead. However, lead is sometimes present in pipes connecting older homes to the water system or in fixtures and home plumbing. Water utilities adjust the water's chemistry at the treatment plant to minimize the possibility of lead dissolving into the water, but there are additional steps you can take at home.

What You Can Do

Have your water tested

Contact your water provider to see if it has home testing options available. If not, it can help you find a certified laboratory to test your water. Tests typically run between 15 and 50 dollars.



Find out if you have a lead service line

Your utility may or may not know if you have a lead service line. If not, you can find out yourself or with the help of a licensed plumber. Service lines typically enter the home in the basement or crawl space. If the pipe is lead, it will have a dull finish that shines brightly when scratched with a key or coin. Using a magnet can also help you identify a lead pipe, because even a strong magnet will not cling to lead.

Have your plumbing inspected

A licensed plumber can inspect both your service line and other materials in contact with your drinking water. Lead solders, pipe fittings and brass fixtures can be potential problems.

Protect Your Household

There are steps you can take right away to reduce the possibility of lead in your water:



- Run the Tap Before Use–Lead levels are likely at their highest when water has been sitting in the pipe for several hours. Clear this water from your pipes by running the cold water for several minutes–which allows you to draw fresh water from the main. Your water provider or plumber can help you assess the right length of time.



- Clean Aerators–Aerators are small attachments at the tips of faucets which regulate the flow of water. They can accumulate small particles of lead in their screens. It's a good idea to remove your aerators at least monthly and clean them out.