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Masser, Michelle

From: Kevin S. Watsey <Kevin.Watsey@amwater.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2016 11:45 AM
Subject: Fact Sheet on Lead in Drinking Water

Mayors, Administrators, managers, and Clerk,

Below is a link to a fact sheet that we have created that answers some of the most frequently asked questions about lead. Please feel free to post this on your website or use it however else you think is necessary. As always, feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks

http://www.amwater.com/files/Lead%20-%20NJ%20-%2002-2016.pdf

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LEAD

The most common source of lead in tap water is the plumbing in your home

NEW JERSEY AMERICAN WATER

New Jersey American Water regularly tests for lead in drinking water and has taken steps to minimize levels through improvements in corrosion control.

Although these tests indicate that lead is not an issue in the treated water leaving our facility, lead and/or copper levels in some homes and businesses might be detected due to customer use of lead pipes, lead solder and molded metal faucets in household plumbing.

Health effects associated with high levels of lead

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets standards related to lead in drinking water. Lead levels that exceed these standards could cause serious damage to the brain, kidneys, nervous system and red blood cells. The greatest risk, even with short-term exposure, is to young children and pregnant women.

Assessing your exposure to lead

Lead levels in drinking water are more likely to be higher if:

- your home or water system has lead pipes or has a lead service line
- your home has copper pipes with lead solder
- your home was built before 1986 AND
- you have soft or acidic water
- water sits in the pipes for several hours

Minimizing your exposure

You cannot see, smell or taste lead, and boiling water will not remove lead. Although our water is treated to minimize the risk of lead, you can reduce your household's exposure to lead in drinking water by following these simple steps:

- **Flush your tap before drinking or cooking with water, if the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours.** The longer the water lies dormant in your home's plumbing, the more lead it might contain. Flush your tap with cold water for 30 seconds to two minutes before using. To conserve water, catch the running water and use it to water your plants.
- **Try not to cook with or drink water from the hot water faucet.** Hot water has the potential to contain more lead than cold water. When you need hot water, heat cold water on the stove or in the microwave.
- **Remove loose lead solder and debris from plumbing.** In newly-constructed homes or homes in which the plumbing was recently replaced, remove the strainers from each faucet and run the water for 3 to 5 minutes. When replacing or working on pipes, be sure to use materials that are lead-free. Use of lead-based solders has been banned.
- **Look for the "Lead Free" Label.** When replacing or installing fixtures, look for the "lead free" label. Under the 2011 Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act, fixtures must have 0.25% lead or less to be considered "lead free."
- See also information on page 2 related to home treatment devices.

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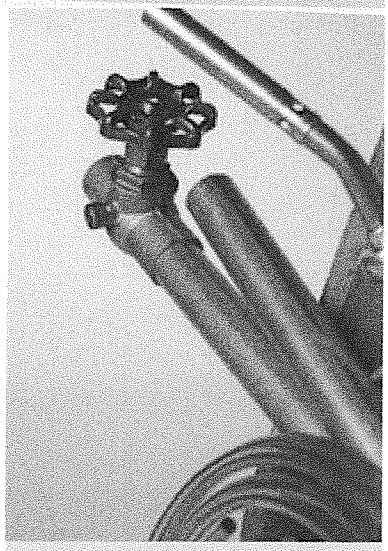

For more information

New Jersey American Water Customer Service Center:
1-800-272-1325
M-F, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Check us out online
newjerseyamwater.com

For more information on drinking water standards:
Contact the EPA Hotline at 1-800-426-4791

AT LESS THAN A PENNY PER GALLON, WATER IS A REAL VALUE

If you are still concerned about elevated levels and want to find out where you can have your water tested by a certified laboratory, contact the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or visit the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's website at www.state.nj.us/dep.

FREQUENTLY ASKED Q AND A

Is lead in water regulated and does New Jersey American Water comply with standards?

Yes and yes. The EPA's lead standard is an action level that requires treatment modifications if lead test results exceed 15 parts per billion (ppb) in more than 10 percent of first draw samples taken from household taps.

New Jersey American Water regularly tests for lead at the end of its treatment process. Testing has shown that lead is not an issue in the water exiting any of our water treatment facilities.

We also conduct tests in our distribution system in accordance with the EPA regulatory requirements. For more information on your system, visit **newjerseyamwater.com** to view the latest consumer confidence report. Under the **Water Quality & Stewardship** menu, select **Water Quality Reports**.

Does that mean I do not have lead in my water?

Not necessarily. You might have lead in your drinking water if your household plumbing system has lead pipes or if lead solder was used in the joints of copper pipes.

Homes built before 1930 are more likely to have lead plumbing systems. Lead pipes are dull grey color and scratch easily revealing a shiny surface. Lead solder used to join copper pipes is a silver or grey color. If your house was built before January 1986, you are more likely to have lead-soldered joints. If you do, the chance of the lead leaching into your drinking water is greater when water has been standing in the pipes for many hours, overnight for example.

Lead kits that test for the presence of lead in solder are available at some hardware stores.

Should I flush my faucets every morning before using it to drink or use for food prep?

Yes. If you know you have lead pipes or lead solder was used on your copper piping, **flush your tap before drinking or cooking with water, if the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours.** The longer the water lies dormant in your home's plumbing, the more lead it might contain. Flush your tap with cold water for 30 seconds to two minutes before using.

How can I tell if my water contains too much lead?

You can have your water tested for lead. Since you cannot see, taste or smell lead dissolved in water, testing in the only sure way of knowing.

Will electrical grounding increase my lead levels?

Possibly. If grounding wires from electrical systems are attached to household plumbing, corrosion and lead exposure may be greater. Customers can choose to pay to have an electrician check the house wiring.

Getting your water tested for lead

New Jersey American Water does not provide testing for lead for individual customers who request it. Customers can choose to have their water tested at their cost at a certified laboratory.

For more information

- Contact EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act Hotline: 1-800-426-4791
- Visit DEP online at www.state.nj.us/dep

Do I need a home treatment device for lead?

The need for a home treatment device is a customer-specific decision. New Jersey American Water takes steps to reduce the potential for lead to leach from your pipes into the water. This is accomplished by adding a corrosion inhibitor or by reducing the acidity of the water leaving our treatment facilities. Certain home treatment devices, such as water softeners for example, might increase lead levels in your water. Always consult the device manufacturer for information on potential impacts to your drinking water or household plumbing.

newjerseyamwater.com

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