

Lead in Drinking Water

Q: What do I need to know about lead in my drinking water?

- You cannot see, taste or smell lead in drinking water.
- Boiling water will not remove the lead.
- Pipes bringing water into your home and pipes, solder, fittings and fixtures in your house may contain lead.
- All plumbing between the water meter to, and throughout, your home is your responsibility – and can be a source of lead.
- When water contacts pipes, solder, fittings, or fixtures containing lead, the lead can be dissolved into the water.
- Lead-free and low-lead pipes, solder, fittings, and fixtures may still contain some lead.
- Brass and bronze pipes and fittings, brass and chrome faucets, and plastic faucets may contain lead.

Q: What are the health effects of lead?

- Lead can cause serious health problems for all ages, but it is especially dangerous for pregnant/nursing women and children.
- Because lead can be transmitted across the placenta and in breast milk, it can be a danger to fetuses and nursing babies.
- Lead can be indirectly dangerous to a pregnant mother if a miscarriage results.
- Lead can cause damage to the brain and kidneys.
- Lead can interfere with red blood cell production and interfere with oxygen transport in your body.
- Scientists have linked lower IQ in children with lead in the brain.
- Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be more affected by low levels of lead than healthy adults.
- A simple blood test can detect high levels of lead in your body. If you are concerned, consult a physician for advice on testing.



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Q: How can I reduce my exposure to lead in drinking water?

- When you make baby formula, baby food or any other food or drink (for any age) do not use water from the hot water faucet.
- If you need cold or hot water for drinking, cooking or preparing baby formula, let the cold-water faucet run for 15-30 seconds, especially if the faucet has been unused for several hours. Then heat the water on the stove or in the microwave, if needed.
- If lead pipes bring water to your house, let the water run for several minutes before drinking.
- If possible, have the lines replaced with metal free plumbing.
- Consider connecting to a local public water supply, where feasible. Public water systems are required to conduct periodic testing and have processes in place to remove such elements.
- To remove loose lead solder and debris from the plumbing in newly constructed homes, or homes where the plumbing has recently been replaced, remove faucet strainers and run the water for 3 to 5 minutes. Periodically remove strainers from all faucets and flush the debris that has accumulated.
- Consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. If you purchase a water filter, make sure the filter is approved to reduce lead. Additionally, you can contact NSF International at **800-NSF-8010** or visit www.nsf.org for information about performance standards for water filters.

Q: Can I have my drinking water tested for lead?

Yes! Contact DEQ's State Environmental Laboratory at **(405) 702-1000** or **(866) 412-3057**.

Q: Where can I get more information?

For more information about reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at <https://tinyurl.com/htyaehpt> or contact your health care provider.