

## SOURCES OF LEAD

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of infants who drink baby formula and concentrated juices that are mixed with water. The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up to 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of pipes and other fixtures in household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome plated brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect houses and buildings to water mains (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2 percent lead. Current U.S. law limits the amount of lead allowed in plumbing fixtures to less than 0.25 percent by weight.

Lead pipes and water services that have been in place and undisturbed for many years are typically coated with a lime scale that creates a barrier between lead pipes and drinking water. However, it is possible that when water stands for several hours in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead, the lead may dissolve into the drinking water in those pipes. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon if the water has not been used all day, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

## 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 the child's brain development.

Your health care provider can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with more information about the health effects of lead.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

[www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities)

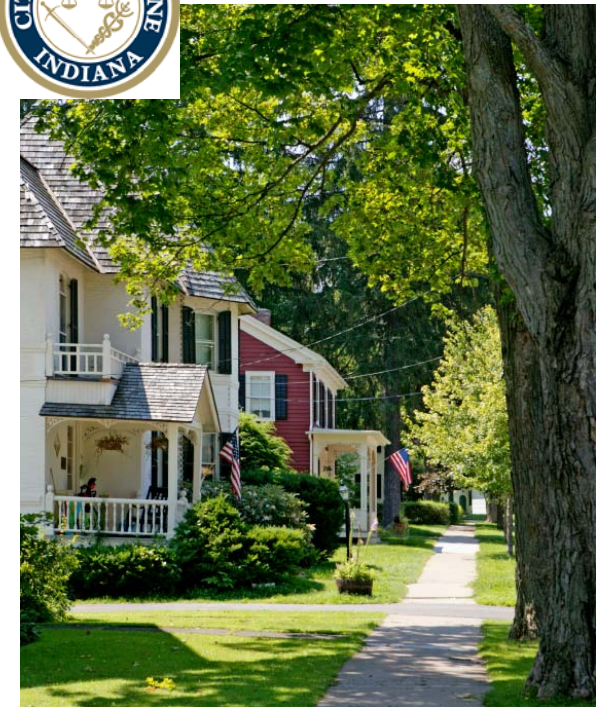
[www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)

Indiana State Department of Health  
(317) 233-1250

Fort Wayne/Allen County Dept. of Health  
(260) 449-8600

**To have your tap water tested for lead:  
Please contact a laboratory certified to test for lead in drinking water. A list of those laboratories is available on-line at:  
[www.in.gov/isdh/22452.htm](http://www.in.gov/isdh/22452.htm).**

## tips to REDUCE LEAD in YOUR HOME



Water leaving Fort Wayne's Three Rivers Water Filtration Plant meets all state and federal standards for lead. But lead may enter your drinking water from pipes that bring water from the City's water main to your home or from your own private plumbing. Here are tips to help reduce your potential for exposure to lead from plumbing.



# tips to REDUCE LEAD in YOUR HOME

## RUN THE COLD WATER WHEN IT HAS NOT BEEN USED FOR SEVERAL HOURS



Lead can dissolve in water when it stands in pipes for a long period of time. Flushing the tap by running the water brings fresher water into your home.

When the water has not been used for several hours, let the cold water run for at least 30-seconds, or until you feel it get slightly colder, before using it for cooking or drinking.

## USE ONLY COLD WATER FOR COOKING AND DRINKING



- Hot water may contain a higher concentration of lead and solids that have built up in the water heater over time.
- For hot water, draw water from the cold water tap then heat it.
- Boiling water does not remove lead; it may make it more concentrated.

## INSTALL LEAD-FREE PLUMBING FIXTURES

- Lead-free plumbing fixtures prevent lead from entering you home's drinking water system.
- Look for "lead-free" labels when buying plumbing fixtures.

## CONSIDER USING A WATER FILTER IF YOU ARE PREGNANT OR HAVE YOUNG CHILDREN



Fort Wayne City Utilities produces and distributes high quality water that meets all federal and state health and safety standards.

However, pregnant women and young children are at a higher risk for effects from lead exposure.

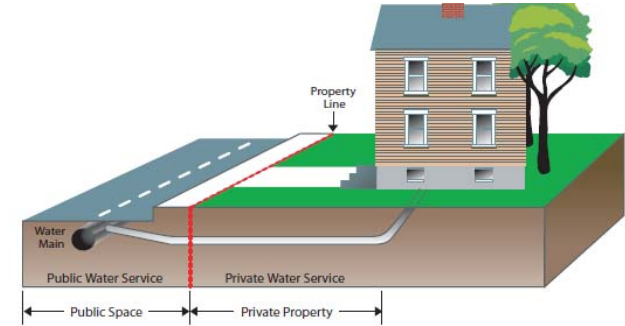
- If you have a lead water service line and you are pregnant and/or you have children under the age of six, consider using filtered tap water to prepare infant formula or concentrated juices.
- More health information for women and children is available from the Fort Wayne-Allen County Department of Health by calling (260) 449-8600.

## CLEAN OR REPLACE FAUCET STRAINERS

- It's a good idea to routinely remove faucet aerators and clean the strainers of all debris.
- Sediment that builds up in the strainer may contain lead from pipes.

## DRAIN YOUR HOT WATER HEATER ANNUALLY

- Draining the hot water heater removes sediment that may have accumulated over time. The sediment can contain lead.



## REPLACE LEAD WATER SERVICE LINES

- Replacement of the entire lead service line - both the portion owned by City Utilities and the portion located under private property - is the most effective way of reducing lead that may be present in the drinking water in your home.
- In most cases, Fort Wayne City Utilities will replace the public portion of the service line if the property owner agrees to replace the private portion of the service. City Utilities uses a set of criteria to determine priority for service line replacement.
- To find out more about lead service line replacement, please contact Fort Wayne Citizens Services by dialing 311.
- Residents who have or had lead water service lines connected to in-house galvanized plumbing may have higher levels of lead in their drinking water as a result of pipe corrosion. Consider replacing household galvanized plumbing. If replacement is not possible, NSF certified filters or filtering pitchers are available to remove lead.