

How Can Lead Affect My Health?

Exposure to lead can be harmful. A build-up of lead in the body can cause damage to the brain or kidneys, or interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of the body. The greatest risk is to infants, young children and pregnant women.

Your doctor can perform a blood test to determine if you or your child have been exposed to lead. Columbus Public Health's Lead Poisoning Prevention program also offers lead testing and medical follow-up services for children in Columbus and Worthington.

Call **614-724-6000** or visit columbus.gov/publichealth/programs/Lead-Poisoning-Prevention

For residents outside of Columbus visit <https://odh.ohio.gov/find-local-health-districts>

Home Water Treatment Systems

If you are considering a home water treatment device, it is important that you chose the right product for your intended use. Home water treatment devices have limitations and require periodic maintenance and replacement. Reverse osmosis and distillers can effectively remove lead from drinking water. If using a filter, filters must meet NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for "Drinking Water Treatment Units - Health Effects" for the removal of lead.

However, all lead reduction product claims should be verified. Water softeners have little to no effect on lead reduction.

Additional Resources

Columbus Public Health
columbus.gov/lead
614-645-8191

US EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline
epa.gov/safewater/lead
800-426-4791

Ohio EPA Certified Labs for Lead Testing
epa.ohio.gov/static/Portals/28/documents/labcert/Combined-Lab-List.pdf

Ohio EPA - Learn about Lead
epa.ohio.gov/monitor-pollution/pollution-issues/learn-about-lead

NSF International
NSF.org
800-673-8010

AWWA - Drinktap
Drinktap.org

Ohio Department of Health
<https://odh.ohio.gov/find-local-health-districts>

Lead Service Line Inventory
columbus.gov/SLinventory

WANT TO LEARN MORE?
columbus.gov/leadandwater
leadsafelines@columbus.gov
614-645-6725

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Reducing Exposure to Lead in Water



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC UTILITIES

Is Lead in Columbus Water?

There is no detectable lead in:

- The water pulled from the reservoirs and wells that supply your drinking water,
- The treated water that leaves the city's three drinking water plants, or
- The water delivered to your home through the distribution system.

How Can Lead Get In Drinking Water?

Some water service lines, home plumbing (pipes, fittings, solder) and plumbing fixtures contain lead. As water sits in household plumbing over long periods of time, such as overnight or during work and school hours, lead can leach into the water.

Water line breaks and repairs in areas with lead service lines may cause disruptions in water quality, including discolored water and/or potentially a temporary increase in lead levels in drinking water.



Water Quality Information

The U.S. EPA action level for lead in water is currently 15 parts per billion (ppb). During this last testing period more than 90% of the homes tested were below 1.3 ppb.

Columbus continues to be in compliance with all state and federal requirements on lead in drinking water, including the lead and copper rule.

For more information about water quality please see the latest Consumer Confidence Report at

columbus.gov/Water-CCR

or call the lead safe hotline at
614-645-6725

Sources of Lead in Homes

Lead is a common, natural metal found throughout the environment and is used in many commercial products.

Common sources of lead exposure include:

- Lead contaminated dust or soil.
- Lead based paint (banned since 1978). Some lead and copper plumbing materials, particularly prior to 1989, and brass fixtures prior to 2014.
- Certain types of pottery, pewter, jewelry and cosmetics.



The best way to reduce lead exposure in drinking water is to flush the tap for 30 seconds to 3 minutes or until the water temperature changes if it hasn't been used for 6 hours or more.

Effective Ways to Reduce Lead in Your Water

As a standard practice, the USEPA recommends the following actions to reduce possible lead exposure in drinking water:

- If water has not been used for several hours, run the tap until there is a noticeable temperature drop. Then, run water for 30 seconds to 3 minutes before using it for drinking and cooking. This helps flush water that may have contained lead that may have leached from plumbing.
- Use cold water for cooking, drinking and preparing baby formula. Boiling the water will not reduce lead.
- Clean your faucet aerators regularly.

For additional information, visit
drinktup.org or

epa.gov/safewater/lead

Scan to Verify Your Service Line Material



Know your Plumbing Materials

Homes built prior to the mid-1950s may still have a lead service line, unless the water service line has been replaced. Homes built prior to 1989 may have copper pipe with lead solder. Plumbing fixtures (like faucets) made prior to 2014 may contain up to 8% lead.



View the material of your side and the City's side of the water service line at our interactive map.

www.columbus.gov/SLInventory
Call 614-645-7691 to request a paper version of the survey.

How does Columbus Treat for Lead?

Columbus has a very effective program that protects pipes from corrosion. Certified water operators adjust the water's chemistry (pH) and add zinc orthophosphate to the treated water. The treatment process makes the water less corrosive and creates a coating in the pipes to serve as a barrier. This prevents conditions that can cause lead to leach into the water.

As required by Ohio EPA, 50 homes in Columbus are tested to ensure that the corrosion protection program continues to perform well. In addition, various sites are voluntarily tested monthly for lead, and the finished water at our three drinking water plants is tested regularly for corrosivity.