How Lead Gets into Drinking Water

The City routinely monitors the water quality from the treatment facility and distribution system to ensure that lead concentrations are well below established limits. Lead can enter drinking water when a building's service pipes or fixtures that contain lead corrode. The most common problem is with brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and fixtures with lead solder during construction, from which lead can enter into the water, especially hot water.

Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder. Also newer plumbing less than 5 years old may not have developed a protective layer of scale, making these systems more prone to higher lead concentrations without adequate flushing. A number of factors are involved in the extent to which lead enters the water, including:

- the amount of lead it comes into contact with,
- the temperature of the water,
- how long the water stays in pipes
- the presence of protective scales or coatings inside the plumbing materials, and
- the chemistry of the water (acidity and alkalinity) and the types and amounts of minerals in the water. The City utilizes corrosion control treatment that assists in reducing this effect.

Know your plumbing system

Inspect your plumbing, or have a licensed plumber inspect your plumbing for any signs of lead materials or pipes in your system, areas of dead end lines with low water use, or auxiliary water treatment systems that change the alkalinity or salinity of the water, such as water softeners. Even if your home doesn't have a lead service line, lead can sometimes leach from fixtures, like faucets or from lead solder used to join pipes in the past.

Consider Water Testing if You Believe Your Plumbing System Presents a Risk. If you suspect you have lead materials in your plumbing or have a concern that you may have the potential for corrosion induced lead in your plumbing system, consider having a sample analyzed by a qualified laboratory. Some examples of area certified laboratories are listed below. Contact the City Water Division on advice and instructions regarding sample collection.

Certified Area Laboratories

Organization	Street Address	City	Phone
Advanced Environmental Laboratories, Inc. - Tampa	9610 Princess Palm Avenue	Tampa	(813) 630-9616
KNL Environmental Testing	3202 N. Florida Ave.	Tampa	(813) 229-2879
Meryman Environmental, Inc.	10408 Bloomingdale Avenue	Riverview	(813) 626-9551
Southern Analytical Laboratories, Inc.	110 Bayview Blvd	Oldsmar	(813) 855-1844

Helpful Information on Reducing Potential Exposure to Lead in Your Drinking Water

City of Tarpon Springs Water Division

(727) 937-2557

Timely Information

There has been recent increased public awareness and questions regarding lead and public drinking water supplies.

While the City actively works to ensure that lead and other harmful contaminants are not in our produced water or distribution system, there is a potential for lead to be absorbed from the plumbing within a home or building under some circumstances.

This brochure is being distributed as a City initiative to provide information to our water customers. Contained herein are resources for becoming more informed and practical steps on how to minimize the potential for lead within the water supply of a home or building.

How the City Can Help

- Provide additional information on the public water system
- Provide guidance for the customer to consider in taking their own additional measures to minimize the risk of lead exposure due to private plumbing

Simple Measures You Can Take

1. Flush your pipes before drinking: The more time water has been sitting in your home's pipes, the more potential for any lead to transfer to the water. If the water in a particular faucet has not been used for six hours or longer, "flush" your cold-water pipes by running the water until it becomes as cold as it will get. This could take as little as five to thirty seconds if there has been recent heavy water use such as showering or toilet flushing. Otherwise, it could take two minutes or longer. Once you flush your water pipes, you can fill a larger container for later drinking use.

2. Only use cold water for drinking and eating: Use only water from the cold-water tap for drinking, cooking, and especially for making baby formula. Hot water is likely to contain higher levels of lead. Run cold water until it becomes as cold as it can get.

3. Use water filters or treatment devices if warranted on taps for drinking or eating: While replacing lead service lines and old fixtures may be desirable, it isn't always possible. Depending on the lead levels being detected, home water treatment devices may be a more practical alternative. Potential treatment options for lead can include filters, reverse osmosis units and distillers. Make sure the system is certified under NSF/ANSI 53 or 58 standards for lead reduction. The adjacent table lists some examples.

Skin does not absorb lead in water, therefore additional filtration or flushing should not be required for showering or bathing.

Sample of Locally Available Water Treatment Systems, NSF Certified for Lead Removal

Store	Manufacturer	Model Name	Description	Estimated Pricing as of 5/2016	
				Purchase	Filter Refill (per unit)
Lowe's	Brita	SAFF-100	Faucet mounted	$18	$18
Home Depot	PUR	FM3700BV1	Faucet mounted	$25	$15
Home Depot	Zerowater	ZD-013D	Pitcher system	$30	$15
Home Depot	GE	GX1S50R	Under sink mount, separate faucet	$80	$32
Lowe's	Whirlpool (aka Ecodyne)	WHED20	Under sink mount with storage, separate faucet	$97	$45
Home Depot	GE	GXK285JBL	Under sink mount filtration system, uses existing faucet	$127	$50
Lowe's	Whirlpool (aka Ecodyne)	WHER25	Under sink mount with storage, separate faucet	$131	$42

Note that these are for example purposes only and the City does not endorse or recommend particular products. A complete listing can be found on the NSF website: http://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU