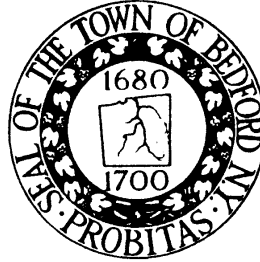


**TOWN OF BEDFORD
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

Kevin Winn, P.E.
Commissioner of Public Works



**Town of Bedford Consolidated Water District Public Notice
Lead in Drinking Water – January 2017**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER. Bedford Consolidated Water District found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

1. 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 brain development.

2. Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found throughout the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, certain types of pottery, porcelain, pewter and water. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body. Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children and pregnant women. Amounts of lead that won't hurt adults can slow down normal mental and physical development of growing bodies. Also, a child at play often comes into contact with sources of lead contamination, like dirt and dust, that rarely affect an adult. It is important to wash children's hands and toys often, and try to make sure they only put food into their mouths.

3. Lead in Drinking Water

Although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, lead in drinking water can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of infants who drink baby formulas and concentrated juices that are mixed with water. It is estimated that drinking water can make up to 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead. Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily because the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome plated brass faucets, and at times, pipes made of lead that connect your house to the water main (service lines). Our records show that the Bedford Consolidated Water System does not have lead service lines. In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2 percent lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials to 8 percent. In 2011 Congress passed the Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act, revising the definition of lead free by lowering the maximum lead content of the wetted surfaces of plumbing products from 8% to a weighted average of

0.25%. The 2011 act made it illegal to sell or install products that do not adhere to the new requirement after January 1, 2014. If your plumbing or plumbing fixtures were purchased before January 1, 2014, they likely have lead content above the current standards.

When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon after returning from work or school, can contain high levels of lead.

4. Steps You Can Take in the Home to Reduce Exposure to Lead In Drinking Water

Despite our best efforts to control water corrosivity and remove lead from the water supply, lead levels in some homes or buildings can be elevated. To find out whether you need to take action in your own home, have your drinking water tested to determine if it contains excessive concentrations of lead. Testing the water is beneficial because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water.

The Town will provide a test for lead at your home at no charge to you. For more information on having your water tested, please call (914) 666-7855. If you would prefer to have your water tested independently, the following is a list of certified laboratories in your area that you can call to have your water tested for lead: Westchester County Environmental Lab at (914) 231-1620 and YML Environmental Inc at (914) 245-3203.

If a water test shows that the drinking water drawn from a tap in your home contains lead above 15 parts per billion, then you should take the following precautions:

- Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in a faucet has stood for more than six hours. The longer water resides in your home's plumbing the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15 to 30 seconds. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of your home's plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your family's health. It usually uses less than two gallons of water and costs less than \$0.30 per month. To conserve water, you can fill a couple of bottles for drinking water after flushing the tap, and whenever possible use the first flush water to wash dishes, watering plants or other purposes that do not involve cooking and drinking. If you live in an apartment complex, letting the water flow before using it may not work to lessen your risk from lead. The plumbing systems have more, and sometimes larger pipes than smaller buildings. Ask your landlord for help in locating the source of lead and for advice on reducing the lead level.
- Do not cook with, or drink water from the hot water tap. Do not use hot water for preparing baby formula. Hot water can dissolve lead more quickly than cold water. If you need hot water for ingestion, draw water from the cold water tap and heat it on the stove.
- Please note that boiling water does not reduce lead levels.
- Remove loose lead solder and debris from the plumbing by removing the faucet strainers from all taps and running the water from 3 to 5 minutes. Thereafter, periodically remove the strainers and flush out any debris that has accumulated.
- Have an electrician check your wiring. If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes, corrosion may be greater. Check with the electrician or your local electrical code to determine if your wiring can be grounded elsewhere. DO NOT attempt to change the wiring yourself because improper grounding can cause electrical shock and fire hazards.
- If a water test shows that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations more than 15 parts per billion after flushing and after we have completed our actions to minimize lead levels, then you may want to take the following additional measures:
 - (a) Purchase or lease a home water treatment device to remove lead. Home treatment devices are limited because each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected, and all of the devices require periodic maintenance and replacement. Devices such as reverse osmosis systems or distillers can effectively remove lead from your drinking water. Some activated carbon filters

may reduce lead levels at the tap, however, all lead reduction claims should be investigated. Be sure to check the actual performance of a specific home treatment device before and after installing the unit.

(b) Purchase, for drinking and cooking, bottled water that is certified by the New York State Department of Health.

5. Why are there elevated levels of lead in some customers' homes and what is being done to reduce the lead levels?

The Town of Bedford Consolidated Water District monitors its water system for chemical levels in accordance with parameters set by the New York State Health Department (DOH) and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). One of the monitoring parameters is the concentration of lead in drinking water. The District monitors by sampling water in customers' homes and buildings where the source of lead is leaching from customer owned pipes.

Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes in the District have lead levels above the action level of 15 parts per billion, or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water. Exceeding the action level means that the District must take action to reduce the levels to below such levels.

Switching to our new surface water supply from NYCDEP in 2013 has likely contributed to this issue. Although the new water supply has many benefits, including eliminating scale build up on plumbing fixtures, it is more corrosive to pipes when compared to the hard well water that was our previous source. Our design engineers anticipated this and included the use of food grade water treatment chemicals to reduce corrosion, including sodium hydroxide and orthophosphate. Our operators have been applying these chemicals at the recommended dosages as approved by the DOH. We have discussed our treatment dosages with our design engineers as a result of this problem, and in July 2016 we switched to a different blend of phosphate in order to further reduce the corrosivity of the water to plumbing. The District has seen a benefit from this change as demonstrated by the significantly lower lead results in the second half of 2016. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of treatment modifications and will be collecting another round of samples in the first half of 2017. We will share the results of this additional monitoring with our customers.

The Bedford Consolidated Water District has a program in place to minimize lead in drinking water. This program includes corrosion control treatment as described above, and public education. If you have any questions about how we are carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation please contact Kevin Winn (914) 241-2458. This notice explains the simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

For more information, call us at 914-666-7855. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/lead> or contact your health care provider. In addition, your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead.

6. Optimal Corrosion Control Water Quality Parameters

During 2015 and 2016 the Water District failed to maintain compliance with the minimum state specified value for orthophosphate, a water treatment chemical added to reduce corrosion of customers' plumbing. The District was using recommended chemical feed settings in order to achieve the state specified entry point concentration of greater than 0.33 mg/l. The average of our entry point concentrations for the period was 0.45 mg/l, above the 0.33 mg/l limit. However, some of our results were below the 0.33 mg/l limit. We will continue to monitor future entry point water quality parameter results and take additional samples as necessary to better ensure that treatment limits are met.