

Easy Steps to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water

1. Run your water to flush the lead out. If the water has not been used for several hours, run each tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes or until it becomes colder before drinking or cooking.
2. Use cold, fresh water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily in hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.
3. Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water will not reduce or remove lead.
4. Consider using a filter. Check whether it reduces lead — not all filters do. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality. Contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters.
5. Test your water for lead. Call the LeadLine at 503-988-4000 to find out how to get a FREE lead-in-water test.
6. Test your child for lead. Ask your physician or call the LeadLine at 503-988-4000 to find out how to have your child tested for lead. A blood lead level test is the only way to know if your child is being exposed to lead.
7. Regularly clean your faucet aerator. Particles containing lead from solder or household plumbing can become trapped in your faucet aerator. Regular cleaning every few months can remove these particles and reduce your exposure to lead.
8. Consider buying low-lead fixtures. As of January, 2014 all pipes, fittings and fixtures are required to contain less than 0.25% lead. When buying new fixtures, consumers should seek out those with the lowest lead content.

Test your water for lead

The City makes free lead-in-water test kits available to its customers. To order your test kit, please call the LeadLine at 503-988-4000 or www.leadline.org.

- Free lead-in water testing
- Free child blood lead level testing
- Lead poisoning prevention workshops

For more information, call us at 503-618-2525 or visit our website GreshamOregon.gov/Lead-In-Drinking-Water. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at <http://www.epa.gov/lead> or contact your health care provider.

For more information about your drinking water, call us at 503-618-2525, or visit us on the web at GreshamOregon.gov/water.

Para obtener una copia de esta información en español, llame al: 503-618-2525.

CITY OF
GRESHAM

1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway
Gresham, Oregon 97030

Reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water and household plumbing

CITY OF
GRESHAM
GOING BEYOND

SEE BACK FOR DETAILS

FREE TESTING INFO

GreshamOregon.gov/water

REVISED: JUNE 2019



Important Information About Lead in Your Drinking Water

The City of Gresham found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes. 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.

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 could affect brain development.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found throughout the environment. Common sources of lead exposure are from lead-based paint, household dust, soil, and plumbing materials. Lead is also found in other household objects such as toys, cosmetics and pottery.

Lead is rarely found in Gresham's source waters, and there are no lead-based service lines in the distribution system. Today, the main sources of lead in water in the Gresham area are from the plumbing in homes and other buildings. Lead solder was once used to join copper pipes, brass plumbing fixtures and components, including those advertised as "lead free." In homes built or plumbed with copper pipes before 1985, lead solder may have been used. When water stands in plumbing systems that contain lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. Water that has been sitting in household pipes for several hours, such as in the morning, or after returning from work or school, is most likely to contain lead.

If present, lead in drinking water can make up 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead. Infants who consume mostly mixed formula can receive 40 percent to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

In this area, dust from paint in homes built before 1978 is the most common source of exposure to lead. Other sources include drinking water, soil, pottery, cosmetics, folk medicines, toys, some occupations, and hobbies.

Water Treatment and Programs

Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in household plumbing. Our water is treated to reduce corrosion in plumbing by increasing the pH of the water. Comparison of monitoring results with and without pH adjustment shows over 50 percent reduction in lead at the tap. In addition to reducing lead exposure in drinking water, the City of Gresham supports programs to reduce exposure to lead from all sources.

Since the Lead and Copper Rule was enacted, science has shown there are no safe levels of lead exposure. As a result, improvements in the treatment are underway to further reduce lead in drinking water at customer taps. These scheduled improvements are to be in place by April, 2022.

For information about the hazards of lead, ways to reduce your exposure to lead, and how to have your water tested for lead, contact the Multnomah County Health Department LeadLine, 503-988-4000 or www.leadline.org.

CITY OF
GRESHAM