
Public Education for Lead

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Elevated lead levels were detected in drinking water samples from two homes in the Valley Green Service Area of the North Kootenai Water District. The District responded by conducting a study of our water system in coordination with staff from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's drinking water program. Details of our study and additional planned sampling are further explained on page 2 of this notice.

Elevated lead levels from the two homes where samples were collected were 54 and 190 parts per billion. Follow up testing for lead levels from the two homes as part of our study were 14 and 2.4 parts per billion. It is required the District provide you with the information below as initial lead results exceeded 15 parts per billion.

Health Effects of Lead

Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and children 6 years and younger. Please read this notice closely to learn what you may do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

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.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. Lead can also be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the work place and exposure from certain hobbies (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children's metal jewelry.

When water is in contact for several hours with pipes (or service lines) or plumbing that contains lead, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead.

EPA estimates that 10 -20% of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water can receive 40 -60% of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Your Exposure to Lead in Your Water

1. **Run your water to flush out lead.** If the tap hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 15-30 seconds to flush lead from interior plumbing or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking.
2. **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to cook, drink, or make baby formula.
3. **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
4. **Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.** You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality.
5. **Test your water for lead.** Call us at the number listed below to find out how to get your water tested for lead. A list of Idaho certified laboratories is available at <http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/Labs/CertificationDrinkingWaterLabs/tabid/1833/Default.aspx>

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6. **Get your child's blood tested.** Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead, if you are concerned about exposure.
 7. **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures containing lead.** Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. Prior to January 2014, the law allowed fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8% lead to be labeled as "lead free." "Lead free" is now defined as a weighted average of less than or equal to 0.25%. Visit the National Sanitation Foundation website at www.nsf.org to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

Details of the Districts Study and Future Sampling Requirements

Two of five samples collected on August 16, 2016 from homes served by the Valley Green System of North Kootenai Water District exceeded 15 ppb for lead. Upon receipt of sampling results, the District was contacted by Suzanne Scheidt-Miller, senior drinking water specialist with DEQ. Arrangements were made for DEQ and District staff to meet with the two homeowners on August 24th to further investigate the source of lead and collect follow up samples under similar circumstances as samples collected on August 16th. A third sample for lead was collected from the Valley Green well.

Original lead sample results collected on August 16th from the two kitchen taps were 54 and 190 ppb. Results from follow up lead samples collected by District and DEQ staff on August 24, 2016 were 14 and 2.4 parts per billion respectively. The first homeowner indicated the kitchen faucet had been recently been replaced (prior to August 16th); the second homeowner indicated a loose fitting on kitchen plumbing had been repaired since the time the original sample was collected on August 16th. The lead result from a sample collected on August 24th from the outside hose bibb at the home where the kitchen faucet had been replaced was 4 parts per billion. The well supplying the Valley Green system was sampled for lead as part of the study, the result was 1.5 ppb.

The District will be collecting as required by DEQ regulations, 10 lead samples from homes on the Valley Green system in December of 2016. A second round of 10 samples will be collected prior to June 30, 2017.

There are no lead service lines or lead water mains on the Valley Green water system.

If you install new faucets in your home you should 1) make sure that the faucet is made with lead free bronze, and 2) for the first 6 months run water for 15-30 seconds each time you draw water from the faucet.

For More Information

Call us at 208-687-6593 or visit DEQ website at www.deq.idaho.gov or Suzanne Scheidt Miller DEQ Senior Drinking Water Analyst at 208-666-4624. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at www.epa.gov/lead or contact your health care provider.

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Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable.
Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.