



General Information on Drinking Water & Lead

You may have read about or watched recent stories in the news about lead in drinking water, and we want to provide you with information about our system. The Northern Kentucky Water District (NKWD) takes the issue with lead seriously. We test the finished water leaving the treatment plants two times a month for lead. Your water does not contain lead when it leaves the NKWD's treatment plants. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with home plumbing and service lines (the pipe connecting your home to the water main).

The U.S. EPA published a regulation in 1991 to control lead in drinking water at customers' taps. Our monitoring and reporting are conducted in accordance with these regulatory requirements and guidance. The regulations include testing for lead in water samples collected from customers' homes. The NKWD has been in continuous compliance with the lead standards. The most recent round of lead testing completed in 2021 showed there were no sites above the lead action level of 15 parts per billion. However, because every home is different, the amount of lead in your tap water may be lower or higher than the monitoring results for the selected sites.

Protecting you against exposure to lead is a shared responsibility. The NKWD is required to provide treatment that minimizes the corrosivity of the water. We do this by adjusting the water's pH and by feeding an inhibitor that protects materials against corrosion from the water. You can take responsibility for identifying and removing lead service materials within your home, including the service line going into the home. If you're concerned about plumbing materials in your home, you may wish to have your water tested by contacting our laboratory at (859) 441-0482. There may be a charge assessed for multiple lead analyses.

Conversion from using lead as a service line material to copper took many years, but the use of lead lines was generally phased out by the 1950s. If you decide to replace your service line, please contact our office at (859) 578-9898, so we can review the type of service line material being replaced. Lead solder for joining copper pipe and fittings was commonly used by building contractors for interior plumbing until it was banned in Kentucky in 1988. Until new standards further reduced allowable lead content in 2014, brass faucets and fixtures could still contain up to eight percent lead. The current standard limits lead to 0.25% in plumbing products.

There are some steps you can take to minimize the potential for exposure to lead in drinking water. Do not drink, cook, or make baby formula with water from the hot water tap. When your water has been sitting for several hours, flush your cold water tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking.

Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline 1-800-426-4791 or at <http://www.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead>.