

Steps To Reduce Your Exposure To Lead

Be Mindful Of Lead Sources

There are many exposures to lead in our environment. It can be found in lead-based paint, soil, household dust, food, and certain types of pottery and porcelain.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that 80% or more of a person's total exposure to lead comes from sources other than drinking water.

Lead-based paint is especially dangerous once it has peeled and broken down into paint chips and dust. Children have the highest risk for ingesting lead and may contact it in dirt, dust, and paint chips. For this reason, it is important to wash children's hands and toys often.

You may consider consulting your pediatrician to check your child's blood for lead.

Testing Your Water For Lead

Contact us to find out how to get your water tested for lead. We can provide a list of labs certified to test lead in drinking water.

An average cost per test is \$30. Test results will give you an understanding of how much lead may dissolve into your water over a non-use period of 6-10 hours.

Do Not Boil Water To Remove Lead

Boiling your water will not reduce or remove any lead.

For Answers to Questions

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For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit the EPA's website at www.epa.gov/lead, call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD, or contact your health care provider.

Mission Statement

To protect public health by providing high quality water for domestic and fire protection purposes while emphasizing cost control, innovation, and customer service.

Is There Lead In My Drinking Water



You Won't Find Lead . . .

- In our source of supply, Floods Pond in Otis
- In the distribution pipes that carry water in the street to home and businesses
- In any known service line running from the water main into individual buildings (unlike services lines in Flint MI and some other cities)

For Bangor Water customers, the common source of lead in drinking water is

- Lead solder used inside the building to join pipes
- Household fixtures such as faucets manufactured with some lead components

We treat our water to make it less corrosive, and reduce the potential for lead to leech from internal plumbing. Using or running the water on a regular basis further reduces the time that water is in long-term contact with internal plumbing.



The use of lead solder was banned in the U.S. by 1986, but it is most likely present in older homes.

Controlling the potential for lead to dissolve into drinking water has been a part of water treatment at Bangor Water since long before the national lead and copper regulation was in place. Our efforts have included:

- An intensive effort in the 1970's-80's to identify and remove lead components – such as service lines – throughout our system
- Treatment of water to reduce “corrosivity”
- Installation of “lead free” water meters
- Compliance with required testing beginning in 1992.
 - The types of homes required to be tested are those known to have lead solder, so test results represent a “worst case scenario” of water that has been in contact with the household plumbing for 6-10 hours without use.

After results in 2010 found lead levels at some of these homes to be higher than allowed, we evaluated various options for modifying our water treatment process, and implemented the changes on a trial basis. Test results through the end of 2013, in 2014, and in 2015 show levels of lead at the test homes now meet lead regulations.

Department of Health
and Human Services

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Consequently, the Maine Drinking Water Program has noted that Bangor Water has returned to full compliance with lead and copper regulation. And of course, test monitoring will continue as required!

Steps You Can Take To Reduce Your Exposure In Drinking Water

Replace Plumbing Fixtures

Faucets, fittings, and valves currently in your home may contain lead. Prior to January 2014, plumbing fixtures with up to 8% lead were legally sold in the U.S.

Since then new plumbing fixtures sold in the U.S. are now required to have “not more than a weighted average 0.25% lead”.



In place for more than two years, new products intended for contact with drinking water have the lowest possible lead content. **Replacing older plumbing fixtures with “lead free” products can further reduce the potential for lead exposure in your home.**

Flush and Use Cold Water

When the water has not been used for several hours, run the cold water tap for 2-3 minutes before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes away any lead-containing water— **at a cost of about two cents per flush.**

Lead dissolves more easily in hot water, so use cold water from a flushed faucet to drink, cook, or prepare baby formula.

