

Lead in Drinking Water



Almost everyone has been exposed to lead at some time in their life. Your drinking water is one way you may be exposed to lead.

Lead in drinking water can be harmful to health, especially for children and pregnant women's fetuses.

Know the facts about potential lead sources. Learn if you should consider testing your drinking water to protect you and your family's health.

How lead gets into drinking water

The most common source of lead in drinking water is plumbing made with lead—like pipes, fittings, fixtures, and faucets. When plumbing breaks down, pieces (particulates) can break away. Lead can also dissolve into the water.



Older Plumbing. Older faucets, fittings, and valves sold before 2014 may contain up to 8 percent lead even if marked “lead-free.”

Older Homes. Homes built before 1988 with copper plumbing may have lead-soldered joints.

Homes on a community public water supply. Some older homes have lead service lines. The service line is the underground plumbing that connects the home to the water main.

Homes on a type 3 public water supply or a private residential well. Parts of a well system like a packer or brass components of a submersible pump, may contain lead.

Problems with lead in drinking water

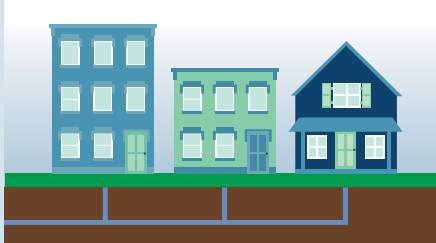

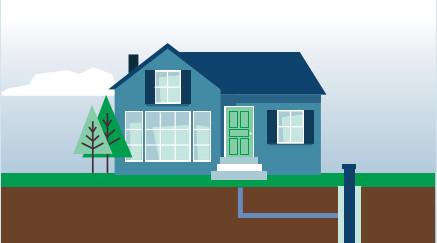
Lead can be harmful to everyone's health, and the most affected is the brain and nervous system. Children and developing fetuses are most at risk, as their brains and nervous systems are still developing. Too much lead is linked to some possible health effects such as:

Children		Pregnant Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower IQ scores• Decreased academic achievement• Decreased hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased problems with behavior and attention related disorders• Decreased kidney function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impaired neurodevelopment of fetus• Low birth weight for infant• High blood pressure during pregnancy

How to find out if lead is in your drinking water

Step 1: Know where your water comes from.

- Your home's water is supplied by one of the following water supply types. Learn more about each one at <http://bit.ly/DrinkingWaterSupplyTypes>.

Community Public Water Supply	Type 3 Public Water Supply	Private Residential Well
 <p data-bbox="126 688 505 871">Check with your supplier or their Consumer Confidence (water quality) Report to see if lead was recently found in the water supply.</p>	 <p data-bbox="605 688 984 829">Check with your landlord or property owner to learn if your drinking water was tested for lead.</p>	 <p data-bbox="1084 688 1463 793">Check your records to learn if your drinking water has ever been tested for lead.</p>

Step 2: Check your home's plumbing.

- Check your home's plumbing or hire a plumber to learn if any of your plumbing may contain lead.
- If your water comes from a Community Public Water Supply, talk with your supplier to learn if your home's service line may contain lead.

Step 3: Call your local health department or certified drinking water lab to test your drinking water.

- If you have concerns about lead in your water, test your home's drinking water.
- Any time there are changes in your plumbing (such as replacement, corrosion, or new water treatment) or nearby road or water main construction, you may want to test your water for lead. This may loosen particles (small pieces) of lead and other metals from your pipes and release them into your drinking water. Consider cleaning the aerators on your home's faucets, <https://bit.ly/CleanYourAerator>, as an aerator can catch peices of lead.
- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends testing well water at least once to learn if lead is in your drinking water.
 - If you have a shallow well (typically, 25 to 85 feet deep), there is a greater chance of the water quality to change. These changes can cause metal, like lead, in wells and home plumbing to break down or dissolve into the water. Call the MDHHS Drinking Water Hotline at 844-934-1315 to discuss testing. If you don't know how deep your well is, visit Wellogic http://bit.ly/MI_Wellogic to find your well record or call your local health department.
- Contact your local health department or a drinking water lab. They can help you get sample bottles and provide instructions on sample collection procedure. It is important to follow the instructions provided for accurate results.
 - The amount of water collected (bottle size) for testing can help identify where the lead may be coming from. To learn more about sample bottle selection go to <http://bit.ly/LeadSampleBottleSelection>.

MDHHS Lead in Drinking Water Recommendations

If any lead is in your drinking water, take action to reduce it, especially if children and pregnant women live in the home. Your water test results, based on the amount of water you collected, will help you identify where the lead may be coming from and which actions to choose. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/LeadSampleBottleSelection>.

Choose a combination of the actions below to reduce lead in drinking water based on your home's conditions. Call the MDHHS Drinking Water Hotline at 844-934-1315 if you have questions or concerns.

Things you can do to reduce lead in drinking water



Get your water moving. Every time your water has not been used for several hours, flush the water pipes. Flushing water pipes moves out the water sitting in your faucets and plumbing that may contain lead. If you have a lead service line or don't know, flush your pipes for five minutes. If you do not have a lead service line, flush for two minutes.

For instruction on how to flush your pipes, go to <http://bit.ly/FlushYourPipes>.



Use a water filter. A water filter can reduce lead at the faucet where water is being used. It does not guarantee that all lead will be removed from the water. Make sure the filter has a third-party certification, NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for lead reduction and NSF/ANSI Standard 42 for particulate reduction (Class I). Follow all manufacturing instructions to make sure it is reducing the lead as you expect.

For more information on choosing a water filter, go to <http://bit.ly/ChoosingLeadWaterFilter>.



Clean your faucet aerators. Clean the mesh screen, or aerator, on the end of your faucet to remove lead particles that may be trapped. They should be cleaned at least every six months. If construction is being done to the water system or pipes near your home—including water main replacement in your home—check and clean your faucet aerator every week until the work is done.

For instructions on how to clean your faucet aerator, go to <http://bit.ly/CleanYourAerator>.



Check your home's plumbing. Check your home's plumbing or hire a plumber to learn if any of your plumbing may contain lead. If replacing faucets, look for replacement faucets made in 2014 or later and make sure they are NSF 61 certified.

For more information on how to identify lead free certification marks on plumbing, go to <http://bit.ly/LeadFreePlumbingMarks>.



Do not use hot tap water for drinking or cooking. Lead dissolves more easily into hot water.

Do not boil water to remove lead. Lead is not removed by boiling water. Water will evaporate during boiling, leaving the same amount of lead in less water.

For More Information

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Drinking Water Hotline

844-934-1315

Michigan.gov/Envirohealth

List of Michigan Local Health Departments

Malph.org/Resources/Directory

Mi Lead Safe Website

Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

Michigan.gov/DrinkingWater

Michigan.gov/WaterWellConstruction

Laboratory Services

Michigan.gov/EGLElab

and choose "Certifications"

