Steps You Can Take To Reduce Exposure To Lead

Despite our best efforts mentioned earlier to control water corrosivity and remove lead from the water supply, lead can still be present in some homes or buildings. Advice for lead safe water practices include:

- Before using any tap water for drinking or cooking, flush your water systems by running the kitchen tap (or any other tap you take drinking or cooking water from) on COLD for 1-2 minutes
- Remove and clean faucet aerators regularly to eliminate any debris such as metal particulates
- Purchase or lease a home water treatment device. Various types of water treatment devices are certified for household use and can remove a broad range of contaminants from water – including lead. Any type of water treatment device that you choose should meet National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) standards (www.nsf.org).
- Test water in houses with older plumbing. For more information on having your water tested by a certified lab, please call 779-348-7151.

Learn About Lead

Information about the risks associated with lead in drinking water is available at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency website: www.epa.gov/lead

Questions?

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City of Rockford Water Division – Water Quality Section
1111 Cedar St
Rockford, IL 61102
(779) 348-7151

For more information, visit our website at
www.rockfordil.gov

THE CITY OF ROCKFORD ILLINOIS, USA

Water Information Bulletin No. 14

Rockford Water Division

Lead and Drinking Water

THE CITY OF ROCKFORD ILLINOIS, USA

Rockford Water Division

Lead And Drinking Water

What You Should Know about Lead and Drinking Water

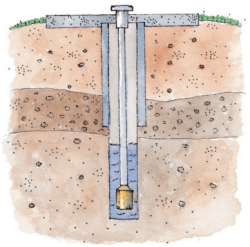
The City of Rockford Water Division is required to notify customers whenever water main, water meters, or water service lines are replaced or repaired. This is because of the possibility that the work being performed could result in the disturbance of sediment, possibly containing lead that could get into the water.

The notification is for informational purposes only. While it is not known for certain whether or not the replacement or repair will adversely affect the lead (if present) in plumbing in and outside of your home, flushing your water lines is a recommended preventative measure to potentially reduce the amount of lead in your water.

It is advised that you flush your water lines for 1 – 2 minutes once the work is completed. This includes removing and cleaning the faucet aerator screens.

What is Lead?

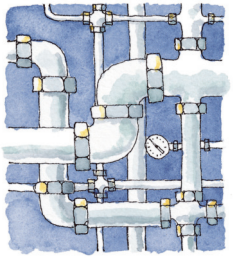
Lead is a naturally occurring mineral found in small amounts in the earth's crust. When consumed in high levels, it can be toxic to humans and animals.



Sources of Lead

Lead is NOT present in Rockford's source water (groundwater), nor is lead in Rockford's treated drinking water. However, lead can enter drinking water through the corrosion of plumbing materials, especially where the water has high acidity or low mineral content that corrodes pipes and fixtures.

Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder. However, newer homes may also be at risk because legally "lead free" plumbing may contain up to 8% lead.



In January 2014, changes to the Safe Drinking Water Act further reduced the maximum allowable lead content of pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fixtures and fittings to 0.25%. Brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and fixtures with lead solder are the most common source from which lead can enter the water, especially in hot water.

What is Corrosion?

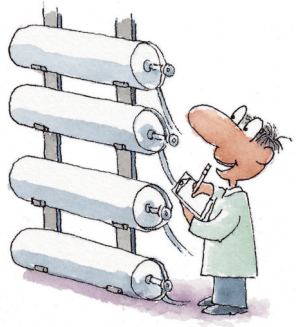
Corrosion is the dissolving or wearing away of metal caused by a chemical reaction between water and your plumbing. The extent to which lead enters your water by this process depends on a number of factors. These factors include the water chemistry, the amount of lead the water comes in contact with, the length of time that the water sits in household plumbing materials and the presence of protective scales or coatings inside the plumbing materials.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) addressed the corrosion of lead and copper into drinking water by issuing the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). This was issued under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The LCR requires that community water supplies use corrosion control treatment to prevent lead and copper from entering drinking water.

Corrosion Control

The City of Rockford's source water is naturally very hard and has a neutral pH. This means that there are minerals present such as calcium carbonate. These minerals coat the inside of plumbing fixtures over time. This coating prevents lead and copper from dissolving in the drinking water. A neutral pH will allow this coating to remain intact.

In compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule, the City also treats the water with a food grade polyphosphate for optimal corrosion control (OCCT). This treatment further coats your household plumbing and prevents lead and copper from entering your drinking water.



The City of Rockford is in compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). Lead and copper is sampled in resident's homes at the kitchen or bathroom cold water tap where water had been in contact with the plumbing for 6 hours.

Due to consecutive years of compliance, the City of Rockford has been placed on a reduced monitoring program that consists of triennial lead and copper testing.

For more information, visit our website at www.rockfordil.gov

THE CITY OF ROCKFORD ILLINOIS, USA