



Lead in Water

Sources of Lead in Drinking Water

Lead can get into tap water if you have lead pipes in your home or a lead service line leading to your home. Lead can also enter tap water if you have lead solder or brass fixtures in your home. Corrosion or wearing away of lead-based materials can add lead to tap water, especially if water sits for a long time in the pipes before use.

Health Threats from Lead

Too much lead in the human body can cause serious damage to the brain, kidneys, nervous system and red blood cells.

You have the greatest risk, if:

- You are a young child, birth through age 5, or
- You are pregnant.

What can I do to protect my child?

- Children who are being fed formula are at highest risk from lead in water, especially following lead service line replacement. If you are formula feeding your child, we strongly encourage you to consider investing in a water filter that is approved by the National Science Foundation (NFS) for removing lead. Or use bottled water for your baby's consumption.
- If you have a lead service line, consider replacing it today. Consider replacing fixtures and plumbing in your home with lead-free alternatives.
- Run water for three to four minutes before drinking it, especially if you have not used your water for a few hours.
- Use only cold tap water to prepare formula or for drinking and cooking.

The Healthy Homes Coalition and the Kent County Health Department remind you that all children in the City of Grand Rapids, all children receiving Medicaid, and children living in older housing should be tested for lead poisoning at one and two years of age. While non-paint sources of childhood lead poisoning are increasing, it is important to remember that lead-based paint chips, dust and tainted soil still result in approximately nine out of ten Kent County poisonings.

For more information, please contact:
Kent County Health Department, 616.632.7063
Healthy Homes Coalition, 616.241.3300
www.michigan.gov/leadsafe



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DEPARTMENT
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Healthy Homes
Coalition of West Michigan