

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

The City of Vergas found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read the information below regarding the General Public Education to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water and to learn what the City of Vergas is doing to address this problem.

For additional information, please visit [Lead \(http://www.epa.gov/lead\)](http://www.epa.gov/lead).

Call us at 218-302-5996 for more information.

Date posted: 11/21/2023

General Public Education Notice

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

The City of Vergas found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

Health Effects of Lead

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

Sources of Lead

Lead is rarely found in natural sources of water such as rivers and lakes or underground aquifers. You may be in contact with lead through paint, water, dust, soil, food, hobbies, or your job. The most common way for Minnesotans to come in contact with lead is through lead-based paint found in homes built before 1978.

Homes built before 1940 may have lead service lines that connect them to public water. Plumbing systems built before 1986 may have lead parts. New "lead free" pipes and plumbing parts may still contain 0.25% lead. Brass parts may also contain some lead. Note that many faucets are made of brass even if they do not have a "brass" color. The amount of lead that gets into drinking water depends on many factors, such as the amount of lead in plumbing materials, water chemistry, and water usage.

How Can I Reduce My Exposure to Lead in Water?

- **Let the water run** before using it for drinking or cooking. If you have a lead service line, let the water run for 3-5 minutes. If you do not have a lead service line, let the water run for 30-60 seconds. The more time water has been sitting in your home's pipes, the more lead it may contain.
- **Use cold water** for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula. Hot water absorbs more lead from pipes than cold water.
- **Boiling water does not reduce lead levels** and may actually increase them.
- **Test your water.** The only way to know if lead has been reduced by letting it run is to check with a test. If letting the water run does not reduce lead, consider other options to reduce your exposure. Many laboratories can test your water to see if it contains lead.
 - [Search for Accredited Laboratories \(https://eldo.web.health.state.mn.us/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam\)](https://eldo.web.health.state.mn.us/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam) to purchase a sample container and get instructions on how to submit a sample.
- **Treat your water** or find an alternative source if a test shows your water has high levels of lead after you let the water run: [Home Water Treatment Fact Sheet \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html).
- **Get your child tested.** Contact your local health department or doctor to find out how you can get your child tested for lead if you are concerned about exposure. Find out more information about child lead poisoning prevention with [Childhood lead exposures \(https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/web/mndata/lead\)](https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/web/mndata/lead).

What Did We Find?

Vergas analyzed tap water samples taken from a number of homes and buildings in the city. Some of the samples were above the action level for lead.

What Are We Doing about the Issue?

The City of Vergas is doubling our testing sites and will continue to monitor lead levels. Currently we have only one home that has tested positive for lead.

For More Information

Call us at 218-302-5996 or visit our website at www.cityofvergas.com. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit [Lead \(http://www.epa.gov/lead\)](http://www.epa.gov/lead) or contact your doctor.

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