

Bay Harbor Islands
9665 Bay Harbor Terrace
Bay Harbor Islands, Florida 33154
(305) 866-6241



LEAD AND YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH



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SOME HOMES IN THIS COMMUNITY HAVE ELEVATED LEVELS OF LEAD IN THEIR DRINKING WATER. LEAD CAN POSE A SIGNIFICANT RISK TO YOUR HEALTH. PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the Town of Bay Harbor Islands are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Not all homes in your community have high levels of lead in their drinking water. A sampling of certain homes, however, has found that some have lead levels above the recommended USEPA level. The owners of these homes have been notified that they have exceeded the USEPA recommended levels. Further testing and monitoring is being performed in compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule.

LEAD IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Lead is a common metal found throughout the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, drinking water, and certain types of pottery, porcelain, and pewter. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body. This risk is especially high for pregnant women and young children.

LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly in the case of infants who drink baby formulas and concentrated juices that are mixed with water. The USEPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies such as rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead that are in the water distribution system and household plumbing.

These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipes, brass, and chrome-plated brass faucets, and, in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect your house to the water main (service lines).

Despite your local water provider's best efforts to control water corrosivity and remove lead from your water supply, lead levels in some homes or buildings have been found to be high. To find out whether you need to take action in your own home, you should have your drinking water tested to determine if it contains excessive concentrations of lead. Testing is essential because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water. Names and addresses of local laboratories are shown at the end of this pamphlet.

The Town of Bay Harbor Islands cares about the health and welfare of the residents in our community and will take all necessary steps to reduce your exposure to lead from drinking water. Under Federal law, your water utility is required to begin a program to minimize lead in your drinking water. This program includes corrosion control treatment, source water treatment, and public education.

A service line is the pipe that brings water from the water main in the street to your home. In early water systems these service lines were made of lead pipe. The Town of Bay Harbor Islands, through its water line replacement projects, has removed all lead service lines serving buildings in the Town.

LEAD AND YOUR HEALTH

Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells, and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children, pregnant women, and their unborn babies. Amounts of lead that won't hurt adults can slow down normal mental and physical development of growing bodies.

In addition, a child at play often comes into contact with sources of lead contamination—like dirt and dust—that rarely affect an adult. It is important to wash children's hands and toys often, and try to make sure they only put food in their mouths.

IMMEDIATE STEPS

The first step is to refrain from consuming water that has been in contact with your home's plumbing for more than six hours, such as overnight or during your work day. Before using water for drinking or cooking, "flush" the cold water faucet by allowing the water to run until you can feel that the water has become as cold as it will get. You must do this for each drinking water faucet—taking a shower will not flush your kitchen tap. Flushing is important because the longer water is exposed to lead pipes or lead solder, the greater the possible lead contamination. (The water that comes out after flushing will not have been in extended contact with lead pipes or solder.)

As you are flushing a tap, you might fill containers with water and put them aside for later use that day. (The water that was flushed—usually one or two gallons—can be used for non-consumption purposes such as watering plants, washing dishes or clothes; it needn't be wasted.)

Note: Flushing may prove ineffective in high-rise buildings that have large-diameter supply pipes joined with lead solder.

The second step is to never cook with or consume water from the hot-water tap. Hot water dissolves lead quicker than cold water. So, do not use water taken from the hot tap for cooking or drinking, and especially not for making baby formula. (If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and heat it on the stove.) Use only thoroughly flushed water from the cold tap for any consumption.



OTHER ACTIONS:

You can reduce the amount of lead in the tap water in your home. Point-of-use treatment such as reverse osmosis devices and distillation units are commercially available. These units may be either purchased or leased. However, they can be expensive, their effectiveness varies, and they must be maintained. Always check the device's capabilities and actual performance in reducing lead. Set up an effective and practical maintenance program to be sure the system is maintained as recommended by the manufacturer. This is the best way to be certain it is doing the job intended. Since these devices also soften water, they should only be installed at the faucet. Of course, attaching a single unit to the kitchen tap will not solve a problem at the tap in the bathroom.

You can purchase bottled water for home and office consumption. Bottled water in interstate commerce is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. Water that is bottled and sold within a state is under state regulation. (EPA does not regulate bottled water.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Town of Bay Harbor Islands, Public Works
Department: 305-866-6241

To find out about the health effects of lead and how you can have your child's blood tested, contact:

Miami/Dade County Office of
Environmental Health at: 305-623-3500

To have your water tested contact a state approved laboratory in your area:

(AEL)
Advanced Environmental Laboratories, Inc.
10200 USA Today Way
Miramar, FL 33025
954-889-2288