

**Public Notice - Tier II
Racine Water Utility Water Distribution System
Lead Action Level**

This Public Notice is to inform you that the water samples for lead taken in 2014 resulted in an exceedance of the Action Level of 15 µg/l. The Utility's reported 90th percentile of lead was 25 µg/l from 71 samples submitted for 2014. Based on the size of the community and 90% exceedance, the State DNR sets the current sampling requirements for lead to include a minimum of 100 sites to be tested twice per year in 2015. The Racine Waterworks Commission is in the process of addressing the 2014 exceedance of lead. The first half sampling in 2015 showed a decreasing trend in lead levels, with the 90th percentile dropping to 4.2 µg/l. Pending results for the second half of 2015, the Utility is optimistic the water system will be back in compliance. Therefore, this notice is to inform the water customers that some homes in the community may have elevated lead levels in their drinking water. Lead can pose a significant risk to our health. Please read the enclosed information.

Because unhealthy amounts of lead can enter the drinking water through the plumbing in your home, it is helpful to know when your home was built. As a rule of thumb, if your home was constructed after 1940, the water service line is not likely made of lead. Conversely, if your home was constructed before 1940, the water service line is probably lead.

If your water service line is indeed constructed of lead and you would like to become a volunteer in the lead service sampling program, please call (262) 636-9441 for more information. If you are unsure of your service line material, please call the Racine Water Utility at (262) 636-9181. Records for service line materials are kept by the Water Utility.

Some potential adverse health effects from high levels of lead include the following:

Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

The Racine water system serves approximately 34,000 customers' homes and businesses and the utility will mail these Public Notices to all billing customers, along with posting the Public Notice at the City Hall and Post Office.

The Racine Water Utility has followed up on this lead exceedance by collecting additional water samples throughout the water system along with an in-depth evaluation of their water system with regard to corrosion control treatment. Due to the lead exceedance, the Racine Water Utility will implement a Public Education Program to better inform the water customers of both the effects of lead in the drinking water and ways to reduce exposure to this contaminant.

The Racine Water Utility is concerned about the water quality of the drinking water for the City and surrounding communities. Since the federal mandate on lead was promulgated in 1993, the Racine Water Utility has worked to control the corrosion of household plumbing by introducing a polyphosphate chemical into the water. This helps treat or coat the pipes and reduce the release of the lead material. Please note that the source water does not have high lead levels and any lead found in the distribution system can be attributed to either lead service lines or from household plumbing.

The Racine Water Utility will continue to work diligently to identify any system problems or deficiencies along with evaluating the corrosion control treatment requirements that can help this system get back into compliance. Until then, the Utility is required to continue to inform all its customers if the lead standard was exceeded in 2014.

If you have any questions regarding this Public Notice, or others about your water system, please contact:

Racine Water Utility
City Hall Annex – Room 227
800 Center Street
Racine, WI 53403
(262) 636-9181

Please share this information with all people who drink water from the Racine Utility, especially those who might not have received this notice directly, for example, people in apartments, schools, and businesses.

For a large print version of this brochure, call (262) 636-9181.

The following is a list of some state approved laboratories in your area that you can call to have your water tested for lead.

Badger Laboratories & Eng. Co. Inc.
501 West Bell Street
Neenah, WI 54956-1392
920-729-1100
jwagner@badgerlabs.com

Commercial Testing Laboratory, Inc.
PO Box 526
Colfax, WI 54730
715-962-3121
pamg@ctcolfax.com

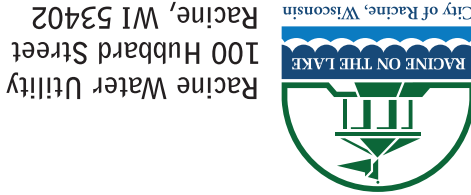
CT Laboratories
1230 Lange Ct.
Baraboo, WI 53913
608-356-2760
cnewsome@ctlaboratories.com

Davy Laboratories
115 South 6th Street
La Crosse, WI 54601
pharris@davyinc.com

Northern Lake Service Inc.
400 North Lake Ave.
Crandon, WI 54520-1286
715-478-2777
TomP@nlsilab.com

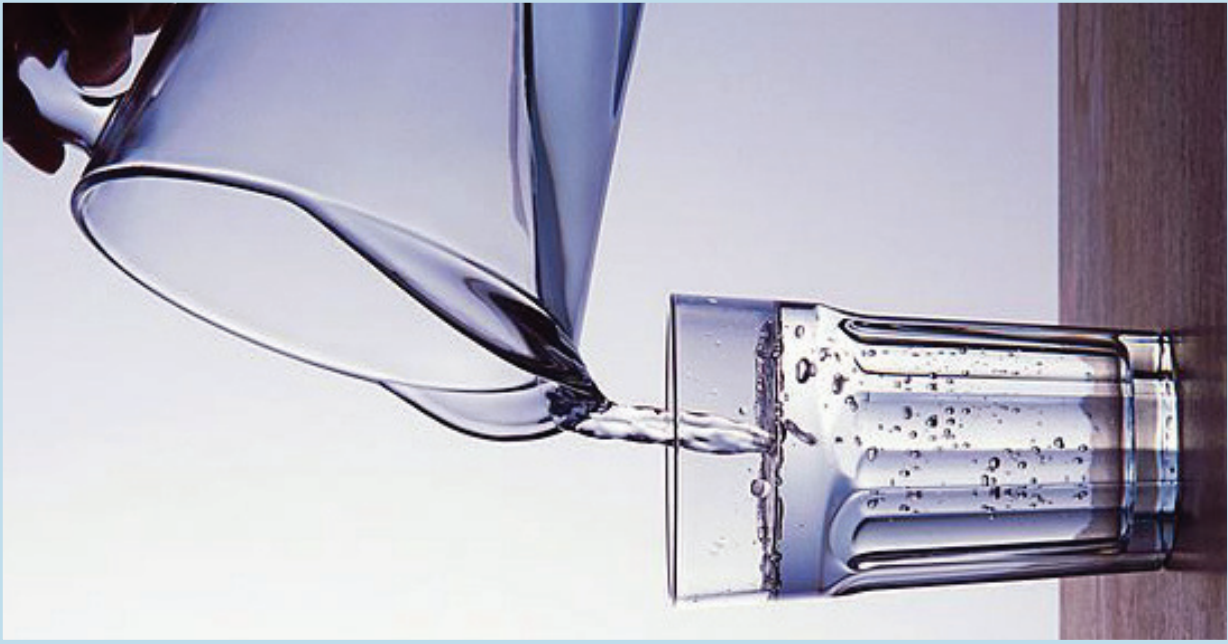
Cardinal Environmental, Inc.
3303 Paine Ave.
Sheboygan, WI 53081
920-459-2500
alautenbach@cardinalenvironmental.com

Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
2601 Agriculture Dr.
Madison, WI 53718
800-442-4518
hill@mail.slh.wisc.edu



Racine Water Utility
100 Hubbard Street
Racine, WI 53402

Lead Education



**Racine Water Utility
Information on Lead
in Drinking Water
2015**

The following language is mandatory for any system that exceeds the lead action level, and the Racine Water Utility is required to inform all its customers.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Racine Water Utility are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes in the community have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 15 micrograms of lead per liter of water (µg/l). Under federal law, we are required to have a program in place to minimize lead in your drinking water. This program includes corrosion control treatment, source water treatment, and public education. We are also required to replace each lead service line that we control if the line contributes lead concentration of 15 ppb or more after we have completed the comprehensive treatment program. Each customer will be prioritized if the results exceed the lead standards. If you have any questions about how we are carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation, please give us a call at (262) 636-9441. This brochure explains the simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

Sources of Lead in Drinking Water

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome plated brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect your house to a water main (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials to 8.0%.

When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon after returning from work or school, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

Health Effects of Lead

Lead is a common metal found throughout the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, certain types of pottery, porcelain, pewter and water. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body. 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 and pregnant women. 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 to try to make sure they only put food into their mouths.

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

Steps You Can Take at Home to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water

Despite our best efforts mentioned earlier to control water corrosivity and remove lead from the water supply, lead levels in some homes or buildings can be high. To find out whether you need to take action in your own home, have your drinking water tested to determine if it contains excessive concentrations of lead. Testing the water is essential because you cannot see, taste or smell lead in drinking water. Some local laboratories that can provide this service are listed at the end of this booklet. For more information on having your water tested, please call (262) 636-9181.

If a water test indicates that the drinking water drawn from a tap in your home contains lead above 15 ppb, then you should take the following precautions:

- Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in a faucet has gone unused for more than 6 hours. The longer water resides in your home's plumbing the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15-30 seconds. If your house has a lead service line to the water main, you may have to flush the water for a longer time, perhaps one minute, before drinking. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of your home's plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your family's health. It usually uses less than 1 or 2 gallons of water and costs less than 50 cents per month. To conserve water, fill a couple of bottles for drinking water after flushing the tap, and whenever possible use the first flush water to wash dishes or water the plants. If you live in a high-rise building, letting the water flow before using it may not work to lessen your risk from lead. The plumbing systems have more, and sometimes larger pipes than smaller buildings. Ask your landlord for help in locating the source of the lead and for advice on reducing the lead level.
- Try not to cook with, or drink water from the hot water tap. Hot water can dissolve more lead more quickly than cold water. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and heat it on the stove.

- Remove loose lead solder and debris from the plumbing materials installed in newly constructed homes, or homes in which the plumbing has recently been replaced, by removing the faucet strainers from all taps and running the water from 3 to 5 minutes. Thereafter, periodically remove the strainers and flush out any debris that has accumulated over time.
- If your copper pipes are joined with lead solder that has been installed illegally since it was banned in Wisconsin on September 24, 1984, notify the plumber who did the work and request that he or she replace the lead solder with lead-free solder. Lead solder looks dull gray, and when scratched with a key looks shiny. In addition, notify the Department of Natural Resources about the violation.
- Determine whether or not the service line (smaller diameter pipe which runs from the main in the street to the household water meter) that connects your home or apartment to the water main is made of lead. As a rule of thumb, if your home was constructed after 1940, the water service line is not likely to be lead. Conversely, if your home was constructed before 1940, the water service line is probably lead. Another way to determine if your service line is made of lead is by hiring a licensed plumber to inspect the line. A licensed plumber can check to see if your home's plumbing contains lead solder, lead pipes or pipe fittings that contain lead. The Water Utility also maintains records of the materials located in the distribution system. Their office can be contacted at (262) 636-9181 where utility staff can search a database to determine if your home is being supplied by a lead service line. If the service line that connects your dwelling to the water main contributes more than 15 ppb to drinking water, after our comprehensive treatment program is in place, we are required to replace the portion of the line we own. If the line is only partially owned by Racine, we are required to provide the owner of the privately-owned portion of the line with information on how to replace the privately-owned portion of the service line, and offer to replace that portion of the line at the owner's expense. If we replace only the portion of the line that we own, we also are required to notify you in advance and provide you with information on the steps you can take to minimize exposure to any temporary increase in lead levels that may result from the partial replacement, to take follow-up sample at our expense from the line within 72 hours after the partial replacement, and to mail or otherwise provide you with the results of that sample within three business days of receiving the results. Acceptable replacement alternatives include copper, steel, iron and plastic pipes.
- Have an electrician check your wiring. If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes, corrosion may be greater. Check with a licensed electrician or your local electrical code to determine if your wiring can be grounded elsewhere. DO NOT attempt to change the wiring yourself because improper grounding can cause electrical shock and fire hazards.

The steps described in the above bullet points will reduce the lead concentrations in our drinking water. However, if a water test indicates that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations in excess of 15 ppb after flushing, or after we have completed our actions to minimize lead levels, then you may want to take the following additional measures:

- Purchase or lease a home treatment device. Home treatment devices are limited in that each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected, and all of the devices require periodic maintenance and replacement. Devices such as reverse osmosis systems or distillers can effectively remove lead from your drinking water. Some activated carbon filters may reduce lead levels at the tap, however all lead reduction claims should be investigated. Be sure to check the actual performance of a specific home treatment device before and after installing the unit.
- Purchase bottled water for drinking and cooking.

You can consult a variety of sources for additional information. Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead. State and local government agencies that can be contacted include:

- a. The Racine Water Utility at (262) 636-9441 can provide you with information about your community's water supply and a list of local laboratories that have been certified by EPA for testing water quality;
- b. The Racine Water Utility at (262) 636-9181 can provide you with information about service installation records (water line from main to meter) that should contain information concerning the construction time and materials used.
- c. Bureau of Health Information and Policy, Division of Public Health at (608) 267-9090 or the Racine City Health Department at (262) 636-9201 can provide you with information about the health effects of lead and how you can have your child's blood tested.

