

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Milltown Water found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings during our latest test cycle the week of June 19th. 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. The 90th percentile value for Milltown was calculated at 20.9 ppb which is above the lead action level of 15 ppb.

What does this mean?

Under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the EPA set the action level for lead in drinking water at 15 ppb. This means utilities must ensure that the water from the customer's tap does not exceed this level in at least 90% of the homes sampled (90th percentile result). The action level is *the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow*. If water from the tap does exceed this limit, then the utility must take certain steps to correct the problem. Because lead may pose serious health risks, the EPA set a Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) of zero for lead. The MCLG is *the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health*. *MCLGs allow for a margin for safety*.

We are taking a number of steps to correct the problem. We will begin sampling for lead every 6 months so we can closely monitor the lead levels in our water system. Your continued participation and support in our lead tap monitoring program is very important. In addition, we will initiate a Public Education Campaign to ensure our customers know about the action level exceedance, understand the health effects of lead, the sources and monitoring of our water, initiate controls to reduce corrosivity of our water (corrosive water can cause lead to leach from plumbing materials that contain lead) and initiate a lead service line replacement.

Although we are taking action to reduce lead levels, your elevated level may also be due to conditions unique to your home, such as the presence of lead and solder or brass faucets, fittings and valves that may contain lead. Our system works to keep the corrosivity of our water as low as possible (corrosive water can cause lead to leach from plumbing materials that contain lead).

What Are the 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. If you are concerned about lead exposure, you may want to ask your health care provider about testing children to determine levels in their blood.

What are the Sources of Lead

Although most lead exposure occurs when people eat paint chips and inhale dust, or from contaminated soil, EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of human exposure to lead may come from lead in drinking water. Lead is rarely found in source water, but it enters tap water through corrosion of plumbing materials. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder. However, new homes are also at risk: even legally "lead free" plumbing may contain up to 8% lead. The most common problem is brass or chrome plated brass faucets and fixtures which can leach significant amounts of lead into the water, especially hot water.

Milltown Water Department is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap 1 to 2 minutes before using the water for drinking and cooking.

What Can I Do to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water?

We strongly urge you to take the following steps to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water:

Run your water to flush out lead. If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 1 or 2 minutes or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes lead containing water from the pipes.

Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Do not cook or drink water from the hot water tap, lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.

Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water will not reduce the lead content

Look for alternate sources or treatment of water. You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters.

Testing your water for lead: There are several labs in the area if you want to have your water tested. Two labs are Garden State Labs in Hillside N.J. 800-273-8901 or Environpro Inc. in Edison, N.J. 732-494-4600.

Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead. New brass faucets, fittings and valves, including those advertised as “lead free”, may contribute to lead in drinking water. The law currently allows end use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8% lead to be labeled as “lead free”. Consumers should be aware of this when choosing fixtures and take appropriate precautions.

For More Information

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit EPA’s website at www.epa.gov/lead, call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or contact your health care provider.

This notice is being sent to you by: **Milltown Water Department**
State Water System ID# NJ1212001

Any questions please call Milltown Borough: John Eckert at 732-828-2100 ext. 137