

Countywide Services Agency

Environmental Management  
Department

Environmental Compliance Division  
Dennis Green, Chief



Terry Schutten, County Executive  
Jim Hunt, Acting Agency Administrator  
Val. F. Siebal, Department Director

## County of Sacramento

### LEAD NOTIFICATION

Note to persons served by \_\_\_\_\_

Water System \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sign

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has adopted regulations requiring specified water systems to provide the following notice regarding lead in drinking water. This notice is being issued in order to comply with federal law.

Lead, a soft metal, has been shown to be harmful to human health if inhaled or consumed. Once the lead has entered the body, it is not readily removed. As a consequence, the total exposure of the person will determine how much lead accumulates in their system.

The main sources of lead are food, air, and water. To protect people's health, public water systems are regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This Act requires that drinking water standards be set.

"The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets drinking water standards and has determined that lead is a health concern at certain levels of exposure. There is currently a standard of 0.050 parts per million (ppm). Based on new health information, EPA is likely to lower this standard significantly."

"Part of the purpose of this notice is to inform you of the potential adverse health effects of lead. This is being done even though your water may not be in violation of the current standard."

"EPA and others are concerned about lead in drinking water. Too much lead in the human body can cause serious damage to the brain, kidneys, nervous system, and red blood cells. The greater risk, even with short-term exposure, is to young children and pregnant women."

"Lead levels in your drinking water are likely to be highest:

- if your home or water system has lead pipes, or
- if your home has copper pipes with lead solder, and
  - the home is less than five years old, or
  - you have soft or acidic water, or
  - water sits in the pipes for several hours."

The amount of lead in the water delivered to the users' hook up is regulated by state law. Testing is required to insure the lead standard is not exceeded. Thus, if lead is present in the drinking water, it is usually from a contamination source in the house plumbing. When water stands in pipes where it is in contact with lead, the lead metal tends to dissolve or leach into the water. Soft water, acidic water and water that has passed through certain home water treatment devices is more corrosive and will leach more lead into the water if lead is present.

## **Lead Notification, continued**

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Water pipes made of lead were used in many houses in the early 1900's. By the 1930's galvanized and copper was the usual material of water piping. However, until 1986, lead solder was used to join copper piping. Lead-free solder is now required for new and repair water piping work.

It is not possible to see lead in your water. The only method of detecting lead in drinking water is to have an analysis done by a state-approved laboratory. If you are interested in having your drinking water tested you may contact the Sacramento County Water Protection Division at (916) 875-8400 for information on state-approved laboratories.

If you have your drinking water tested and it is determined to have high lead levels, or if you suspect exposure from lead pipes or solder, there are methods of minimizing your exposure. Some of these methods are detailed below:

1. "Flush each cold-water tap before using the water for drinking or cooking, if the water has been standing in the pipe for several hours. Normally, letting the cold-water run 2-3 minutes will cause the water that was standing in the pipes (and possibly dissolving lead) to be flushed out. (You may want to run this water into a bucket or pot to use to water plants or some other non-drinking or cooking use.) Remember that taking a shower or flushing the toilet will flush the lines out to that point and reduce the time required to flush your tap to five to thirty seconds.
2. Avoid using hot tap water for cooking or drinking since hot water leaches lead more quickly. It is especially important not to use hot tap water to mix baby formula. It is better to heat water from your cold water tap on the stove or in a microwave.
3. Make all repairs to your drinking water plumbing with lead-free materials. This is now a federal law.

For additional information you can call the toll free, U.S. EPA drinking water hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

The information provided in this notice meets the lead notification requirements of Section 64469, Chapter 17, Title 22, California Code of Regulations.