

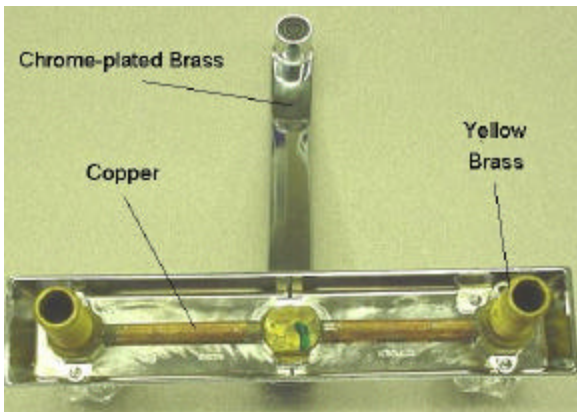
## HOW DOES LEAD GET INTO WATER?

*Lead enters the water ("leaches") through contact with the plumbing.*

Lead leaches into water through:

- Corrosion of
  - Pipes
  - Solder
  - Fixtures and Faucets (brass)
  - Fittings
- Particles caught in aerators

Water characteristics, such as pH, hardness and temperature, affect the amount of leaching.



M. Johnson, Philadelphia Water Dept.

## WHY SHOULD WE TEST THE WATER?

*Lead is a health risk to infants and children.*

Exposure to lead is a significant health concern, especially for pregnant women, young children and infants, whose growing bodies tend to absorb more lead than the average adult. Drinking water is one possible exposure route for lead. A dose of lead can have a big effect on a little body, especially an infant whose diet is mostly liquid.

The longer water remains in contact with leaded plumbing, the more opportunity exists for lead to leach into the water. Facilities with prolonged periods of no water usage, such as schools and day cares, may have elevated lead concentrations in the water.

Many children spend a significant part of their days at school or in a child care facility. The fixtures that provide water for consumption,

including drinking, cooking lunch, and preparing juice and infant formula, should be tested.

*Testing is the only way to confirm if lead is present or absent.*

Lead solder with more than 0.2% lead and plumbing with more than 8% lead were banned in 1987. Buildings did not have to be built with certified "lead-free" fixtures until 1997. Even new, certified components can leach some lead.



EPA photo

*Water System tests do not give the whole picture.*

Most water systems test for lead as a regular part of water monitoring. These tests give a system-wide picture but do not reflect conditions at a specific drinking water outlet.

## HOW DO WE PARTICIPATE IN THE LEAD-FREE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM?

- Develop a sampling plan.
- Take water samples.
- Use a certified lab to analyze water samples.
- Replace outlets with lead-free components, as necessary.

EPA's guidance, "Lead in Drinking Water in School and Nonresidential Buildings" and "Sampling for Lead in Drinking Water in Nursery Schools and Day Care Facilities," can help schools and day cares achieve lead-free drinking water. Obtain these documents through [www.epa.gov/safewater/Pubs](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/Pubs).

See this site for more tools to help achieve lead-free drinking water: [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead/schoola/nddccc.htm](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead/schoola/nddccc.htm)

## HOTLINES AND INFORMATION

National Lead Information Center:  
800-424-LEAD

EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline:  
800-426-4791

Drinking Water Information:  
[www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead)

Plumbing Standards:  
[www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org)

### WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE LEAD RISK AT MY HOME?

- After the water is stagnant for several hours, flush pipes until you feel the temperature change before cooking, drinking, or brushing teeth.
- Use only cold water for cooking and drinking. Never cook or mix infant formula using hot water.
- Have your water tested.

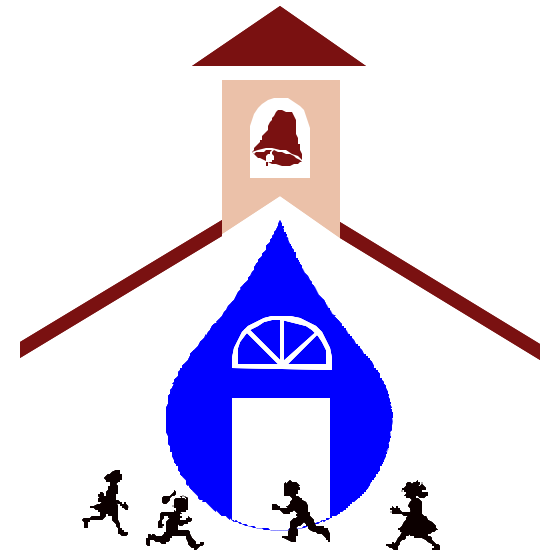
EPA Region III  
Water Protection Division  
EPA 903-F-01-002  
April 2002

Printed on 100% recycled/recyclable paper.



## IS THERE LEAD IN THE DRINKING WATER?

You can reduce the risk of lead exposure from drinking water in educational facilities.



**Lead-Free Drinking Water  
In Schools and Day Cares**