

Lead and Drinking Water

North Attleborough Water Division wants all consumers of North Attleborough drinking water to know that we are taking all of the necessary steps to ensure that we are delivering the best quality drinking water to you each and every day. Our water meets or exceeds all Federal and State Safe Drinking Water Act regulations.

Drinking water leaving our treatment plants does **not** contain lead. However, under certain circumstances, water can cause lead to leach from service lines, lead-based solder on copper pipes (used until 1986), and older brass faucets/fittings that contain lead. If the water is corrosive and is left in contact with lead bearing material over a period of time, lead can leach out. North Attleborough's water mains do not contain lead; pipes carrying water are made of concrete, iron or steel and do not add lead to the water. North Attleborough water is treated to reduce its corrosivity.

There are three approaches for a Water Supplier to reduce lead exposure:

1. Remove all lead from the system. As a practical matter, this is improbable, especially in the short term.
2. Flush mains and service lines in the distribution system and ask residents to flush cold-water taps before use.
3. Treat the water with various chemicals to reduce the corrosive effect on lead.

The North Attleborough Water Division is actively working to reduce lead in drinking water:

1. We are continuing our aggressive water main rehabilitation program of the oldest pipes in the system by replacing water mains.
2. We are administering an extensive "unidirectional flushing" program to reduce accumulated sediment in the distribution system.
3. North Attleboro uses an EPA accepted and successful technique, and is meticulous in its operation and monitoring. We routinely collect samples across our entire distribution area to monitor and assess the effectiveness of our corrosion control treatment. The Towns well-trained, licensed operators carefully adjust the pH of the water to make it non-corrosive, continuously monitoring the results. Water is adjusted from its natural, slightly acidic, and corrosive raw pH level of between 6.0 and 6.5 to a non-corrosive pH of approximately 7.8 to 8.0.
4. Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and EPA are actively involved in reviewing and approving any change in our treatment process.
5. Data shows North Attleborough's success-a better than 90 percent reduction in lead levels in high risk homes. EPA requires that at least 90 percent of samples be below the lead Action Level of 15 parts per billion (ppb). Since 2003, North Attleborough "at the tap samples" was below the Action Level.
6. Water quality data, including lead sampling results are published in the Annual Water Quality Report that is distributed each year to customers as well as tips to reduce lead in drinking water.

Actions our customers can take to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water include:

1. Whenever your water has been unused for several hours, flush your cold water pipes by running the water until it becomes as cold as it will get. This could take as little as 5 to 30 seconds if there has been recent heavy water use such as showering or toilet flushing. Otherwise, it could take 2 minutes or longer.
2. Run tap water until after the water feels cold. Then fill a fresh pitcher with fresh water and place in the refrigerator for future use. Always use cold water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula. Never cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Hot water is likely to contain higher levels of lead.
3. Have your water tested for lead at a certified laboratory. If you do have lead in the first draw, flushing has been shown to significantly reduce lead levels. If you are still concerned, you can purchase a water filter that is certified to remove lead. Just be sure to change the filter element as recommended by the manufacturer.

Additional information

The following are additional resources for information on lead in drinking water:

<https://www.epa.gov/your-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>

<http://www.drinktap.org/water-info/whats-in-my-water/lead-in-water.aspx>