

FLINT WATER RESPONSE TEAM

www.michigan.gov/flintwater

LEAD IN FLINT WATER

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The amount of lead found in some Flint homes' drinking water could affect kids' health.
 - Even small amounts of lead can harm kids' health because they are still growing.
 - Adults are less likely to be harmed by the levels found in the water.
- Filter your drinking water using a National Sanitation Foundation (NSF)-approved filter.
 - You can receive a free NSF-approved filter if you use City of Flint water.
 - Call 2-1-1 to find out where you can pick up a free water filter.
- Some filters can remove up to 99 percent of the lead in water when used properly. To be sure your filter is removing as much lead as it can, carefully follow the instructions that came with it.
 - Run only cold water through the filter.
 - Change the filter cartridge as often as the instructions say.
- Even after changes to the water system, it may take a while before lead levels in your home's water drop.
- Lead is hard to avoid completely. It can be found in water pipes and brass water faucets, old paint, in dirt, at some job sites, and in metal used for some hobbies.

There are a number of steps you can take to keep yourself and your family healthy. Use the tips below to learn more about how to stay healthy:

LEAD IN WATER

Although your water may be a different color sometimes, it is not caused by lead. It's important to remember:

- You can't see, smell, or taste lead in water.
- Lead won't change the color of your water.
- The only way to know what your home's lead levels are is by having your water tested.

LEAD IN BLOOD

- If your children live in Flint or go to school or childcare in the City of Flint, their blood-lead level should be tested.
- You should contact your doctor about testing.
- Testing is available for free at the Genesee County Health Department. Call 2-1-1 if you need help getting there.
- If you are pregnant or nursing, and you have tested negative for high blood-lead levels, it is safe to breastfeed.
- If you are pregnant or nursing and have tested positive for high blood-lead levels, talk to your doctor about the safety of breastfeeding.

TIPS TO KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE FROM LEAD

WATER FILTERS

- Get your water tested. It's free. Call 2-1-1.
- Use a water filter. Call 2-1-1 for a free filter.
- If you do not have a water filter, use bottled water for drinking and mixing formula.
- Use cold, filtered water for cooking.
- Wash fruits and vegetables with filtered water.
- If you must use unfiltered water, run the water for at least five minutes before you use it. To save time and water in the future, it's a good idea to fill up as many containers as you can once you've run your water for five minutes.
- Drain and flush your water heater tanks regularly to remove any lead that has accumulated. Follow manufacturers instructions for maintenance or contact a licensed professional for assistance.

CLEANING

- Wash dishes, bottles and toys with unfiltered soapy water and dry before use.
- It is safe to use unfiltered tap water to mop floors and wipe down countertops.
- It is safe to wash clothes in your washer and dryer.
- Use door mats. Take your shoes off when indoors.
- Vacuuming carpets may pull more lead dust to the surface. Use a non-motorized sweeper to clean carpets.
- Clean windowsills and play areas often with paper towels and soapy water.

TIPS TO KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE FROM LEAD

IN THE BATHROOM

- Use filtered tap water to brush your kids' teeth.
- Adults can use unfiltered tap water to brush their teeth.
- You can use unfiltered tap water to shower or bathe, but don't let kids drink the water when they play in the tub.
- Studies done by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that parents can continue bathing their children in the tub but bath time should be used for bathing only, rather than allowing children to play in the water for a long time.
- Lead will not cause rashes or other skin problems. However, if levels of chlorine or other cleaners are high in the water, it may cause itchy or dry skin (similar to what can happen when you swim in a pool).

CARING FOR PETS

- Use filtered tap water for your family pets' water bowls.
- You can use unfiltered tap water to bathe your pets.
- If you notice your pet acting differently than normal, contact your vet.

HEALTHY DIET

- Eat foods high in iron, calcium and vitamin C.
- Wash hands with soap and warm water before eating.
- If you need fresh and healthy food, call the WIC office at 810-237-4537, or for SNAP food assistance apply at www.michigan.gov/mibridges or visit your local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services office.

GOOD SOURCES OF IRON INCLUDE:

- Lean red meats, fish, and chicken
- Cereals with added iron
- Dried fruits (raisins, prunes)

GOOD SOURCES OF CALCIUM INCLUDE:

- Milk
- Yogurt
- Cheese
- Green leafy vegetables (spinach, kale, collard greens)

GOOD SOURCES OF VITAMIN C INCLUDE:

- Oranges, orange juice
- Grapefruit, grapefruit juice
- Tomatoes, tomato juice
- Green peppers

LEAD INFO

The Flint water response team is focused on the lead in water crisis. In addition to water, scientists have long been concerned about all sources of lead including lead paint, dust, soil, etc.

LEAD PAINT

- Homes built before 1978 likely have lead paint, both inside and outside.
- Old paint is the most common way that kids are exposed to lead.

DIRT

- If you live in the city, there may be lead in the dirt outside your home.
- Before 1996, gas and the exhaust from cars contained lead. More lead will be found in dirt in busy traffic areas.

DUST

- The dust in your home can have tiny amounts of lead from paint and dirt.

HOBBIES AND JOBS

- Solder, fishing sinkers, bullets, and stained glass framing materials are some items that may contain lead. You could also track home lead dust from your job site.

HAVE QUESTIONS?

- For more information about protecting yourself and your family from lead, visit www.michigan.gov/flintwater.
- To find out where you can get a free water filter, call 2-1-1.
- For a free water test, call 2-1-1.
- For more information about lead in your home and what you can do, call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800-648-6942.
- For information on how to help, visit www.helpforflint.com.