

Lead in Drinking Water

Quick Facts

OVERVIEW:

- Infants, young children, and pregnant women are especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of lead exposure.
- Lead can hurt the brain, kidneys, and nervous system.
- Most lead exposure results from lead paint dust and chips.
- Most public water sources are lead free in Massachusetts, but lead can be in your water due to lead pipes, solder, or old fixtures.

WHAT TO DO:

- Learn if your home has lead paint or lead plumbing/fixtures.
- Talk with your child's doctor about testing your child for lead and about lead exposures. In Massachusetts, children must be tested at ages 1, 2, 3, and sometimes 4.
- If you're pregnant, talk to your doctor about the risks of lead exposure and if you should be tested.
- Use cold water for drinking and cooking.
- Run your water before using.
- Call your local water department to learn if your home's service line is made of lead and about testing your water.
- If a water test says the lead level in your water is higher than the EPA action level of 15 ppb and you are pregnant or have young children, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends using bottled or filtered water for drinking and cooking.

Baby Formula Lead Reduction Tips

When mixing powdered baby formula with tap water:

1. Use **COLD** water.
2. **DO NOT** use hot water for baby formula – boiling water does not eliminate lead.
3. Simply warm formula to serve

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For additional health information contact:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Bureau of Environmental Health
617-624-5757

www.mass.gov/info-details/lead-in-drinking-water

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
1-800-532-9571

www.mass.gov/dph/clppp

For additional drinking water information contact:

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Drinking Water Program
617-292-5770

program.director-dwp@mass.gov

www.mass.gov/lead-in-drinking-water

Note for Public Water Suppliers:

This FAQ does not fulfill the notification requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule 310 CMR 22.06B. Public Water Systems should contact MassDEP for specific Lead and Copper Rule requirements.

