

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?

MassDEP Drinking Water Program for information about flushing your pipes and lead in service lines and household plumbing at 617-292-5770, Program.Director-DWP@state.ma.us, or <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/is-there-lead-in-my-tap-water.html>

DPH Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 1-800-532-9571 or www.mass.gov/dph/clppp

DPH Bureau of Environmental Health for health-related information on lead in drinking water at 617-624-5757 or <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/environmental-health/exposure-topics/lead/child-health/sources-of-lead-besides-lead-paint.html>

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