

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Dear Water Customer:

Today's Date: 6/3/2020

Rend Lake water system will soon begin a water line maintenance and/or construction project that may affect the lead content of your potable water supply. Lead, a metal found in natural deposits, is harmful to human health, especially young children. The most common exposure to lead is swallowing or breathing in lead paint chips and dust. However, lead in drinking water can also be a source of lead exposure. In the past, lead was used in some water service lines and household plumbing materials. Rend Lake has never used lead in service lines. Lead in water usually occurs through corrosion of plumbing products containing lead; however, disruption (construction or maintenance) of lead service lines may also temporarily increase lead levels in the water supply. This disruption may be sometimes caused by water main maintenance/replacement. As of June 19, 1986, new or replaced water serviced lines and new household plumbing materials could not contain more than 8% lead. Lead content was further reduced on January 4, 2014, when plumbing materials must now be certified as "lead-free" to be used (weighted average of wetted surface cannot be more than 0.25% lead).

The purpose of this notice is for informational purposes only. While it's not known for certain whether or not this particular construction project will adversely affect the lead (if present) plumbing in and outside your home, below describes some information about the project and some preventative measures you can take to help reduce the amount of lead in drinking water.

Project Start Date: 6/20/20

Project expected to be completed by: 7/20/20

Project location and description: System wide hydrant flushing and maintenance. We will be starting near the water plant and working out from there. All hydrants will be tested for operation and lines flushed. Any issues with hydrants will be addressed at a later date. You may experience discolored water while we are in your area. Please follow the flushing recommendations if this occurs. We will place signs in the area to inform you that flushing is being done. We will leave the signs for a day just as a reminder.

What you can do to reduce lead exposure in drinking water during this construction project:

Run your water to flush out lead. If the plumbing in your home is accessible; you may be able to inspect your own plumbing to determine whether or not you have a lead service line. Otherwise, you will most likely have to hire a plumber.

- If you do not have a lead service line, running the water for 1 – 2 minutes at the kitchen tap should clear the lead from your household plumbing to the kitchen tap. Once you have done this, fill a container with water and store it in the refrigerator for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula throughout the day.
- If you do have a lead service line, flushing times can vary based on the length of your lead service line and the plumbing configuration in your home. The length of lead service lines varies considerably. Flushing for at least 3 – 5 minutes is recommended.

Use cold water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula. Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.

Look for alternative sources or treatment of water. You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter that is certified to remove "total lead".

Clean and remove any debris from faucet aerators on a regular basis.

Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water will not reduce lead.

Purchase lead-free faucets and plumbing components.

Remove the entire lead service line.

Test your water for lead. Call us at: 618-439-4394 to find out how to get your water tested for lead.

While we do not do the testing, we can provide a list of laboratories certified to do the testing. Laboratories will send you the bottles for sample collection. Please note that we are not affiliated with the laboratories and they will charge you a fee.

If test results indicate a lead level above 15 ug/L, bottled water should be used by pregnant women, breastfeeding women, young children, and formula-fed infants.

What Are the Sources of Lead?

The primary sources of lead exposure for most children are deteriorating lead-based paint, lead contaminated dust, and lead-contaminated residential soil. Exposure to lead is a significant health concern, especially for young children and infants whose growing bodies tend to absorb more lead than the average adult. Lead is rarely found in source water, but enters tap water through corrosion of plumbing materials. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder. Brass fixtures may contain lead.

What Are the Health Effects of Lead?

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants (particularly if they drink formula prepared with water containing elevated levels of lead), young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can reach me at 618-439-4394 ext. 222.

Thank you,



Tony Furlow
Water Superintendent
Rend Lake Intercity Water