



INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF GARDEN CITY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
351 STEWART AVENUE
GARDEN CITY, N.Y. 11530-4528

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

The Incorporated Village of Garden City *found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in 16 of the 65 homes tested. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and children 6 years and younger. Please read this notice closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.*

Issues involving lead were discussed in previous notices. **We continue to advise that if you are either unsure about the material composition of your service line or lead levels, please refrain from drinking water directly from the tap and either use a filter certified to remove lead (NSF 53) or drink bottled water, until further notice.**

This notice is brought to you by The Incorporated Village of Garden City, NY State Water System ID#NY2902824, Date September 7, 2023

What Does This Mean?

Under the Authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act, EPA set the action level for lead in drinking water at 15 parts per billion. This means utilities must ensure that water from the customer's tap does not exceed this level in at least 90 percent of the homes in required compliance samples (90th percentile value). The action level is *the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.* If water from the tap does exceed this limit, then the utility must take certain steps to correct the problem. *The Village of Garden City Water System has exceeded the action level for lead. Because lead may pose serious health risks, the EPA set a Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) of zero for lead. The MCLG is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.*

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, 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.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The primary source of lead exposure for most children is lead-based paint. Other sources of lead exposure include lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the workplace (jobs that include house painting, plumbing, renovation, construction, auto repair, welding, electronics repair, jewelry, or pottery repair) and exposure from certain hobbies (such as stained

glass or pottery, fishing, making, or shooting firearms and collecting lead or pewter figurines), as lead can be carried on clothing and shoes. Children's hands or their toys can come into contact with lead in paint, dust, and soil. Therefore, washing children's hands and their toys will help reduce the potential for lead exposure from these sources.

Plumbing materials, including pipes, lead-based solder, new brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows pipes, fittings, and fixtures with up to 0.25 percent weighted average of lead to be identified as "lead-free".

As determined by routine samples from the 10 Village wells that are the source of Village water, the source water has not been found to contain lead. When water is in contact with pipes [or service lines] or plumbing materials that contain lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead. New homes may also have lead; even "lead-free" plumbing may contain some lead.

Steps You Can Take To Reduce Your Exposure To Lead In Your Water

1. **Consistent with our previous advisories, if you are either aware that you have a lead service line or are unsure about the material composition of your service line or lead levels, please refrain from drinking water directly from the tap and either use a filter certified to remove lead (NSF 53) or drink bottled water, until further notice.**

2. **If you know that you do not have a lead service line,** run the cold water tap for no less than two minutes after any period of non-use, and until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes any lead from any internal plumbing within your home.

3. ***Do not boil water to remove lead.***

Boiling water will not reduce lead. In addition, no one should ever cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use the hot water tap to make baby formula.

4. ***Know the internal plumbing of your home and replace plumbing fixtures if they are found to contain lead.***

Depending on the age of the home and whether modifications were made to the system, the internal plumbing of the home (behind the walls) may be comprised of lead pipes. In this case, a whole-house filter on the incoming service may not be adequate, where-as a point of use filter may be more appropriate. Other plumbing materials including interior lead pipe, brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may also contribute lead to drinking water. The law previously allowed end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8 percent lead to be labeled as "lead free." As of January 4, 2014, end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, fittings, and valves, must meet the new "lead-free" definition of having no more than 0.25 percent lead on a weighted average. Visit the National Sanitation Foundation website at: http://www.nsf.org/newsroom_pdf/Lead_free_certification_marks.pdf to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures and how to identify lead-free certification marks on new fixtures.

5. ***Use bottled water or use a water filter.***

If your home is served by a lead service line, and/or if lead containing plumbing materials are found to be in your home, you may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Bottled water is required to be tested for lead. Look for a NYSDOH certification number on the label.

Depending on the age of the home and whether modifications were made to the system, the internal plumbing of the home (behind the walls) may be comprised of lead pipes. In this case, a whole-house filter installed on the incoming water line as it enters your home may not be adequate, where-as a point of use filter may

be more appropriate. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org/Certified/Lead_content/ for information on performance standards for water filters. Specifically, look for filters that have NSF-53 certification for lead. NSF-53 certification is for water filters that “are certified to reduce a contaminant with a health effect.” Whether these filters go on the faucet (i.e., a point of use) or are used for the whole house, having NSF-53 certification is paramount to knowing if the filter will reduce lead in the water. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions to protect water quality. The following EPA website helps identify Point of Use (POU) Drinking Water Filters Certified to Reduce Lead:

https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-12/documents/consumer_tool_for_identifying_drinking_water_filters_certified_to_reduce_lead.pdf

6. *Clean your aerator.*

Regularly clean your faucet’s screen (also known as an aerator). Sediment, debris, and lead particles can collect in your aerator. If lead particles are caught in the aerator, lead can get into your water.

Any measure you take to reduce your exposure to lead should be continued until the lead source(s) has been minimized or eliminated.

Should you test your water for lead?

If lead-containing plumbing materials are identified in your home, you may want to consider testing your water for lead to determine how much lead is in your drinking water. Call us at (516) 465-4020 to find out how to get your water tested for lead.

Should your child be tested for lead?

New York Public Health Law requires primary health care providers to screen each child for blood lead levels at one and two years of age as part of routine well childcare. In addition, at each routine well-child visit, or at least annually if a child has not had routine well-child visits, primary health care providers assess each child who is at least six-months of age, but under six years of age, for high lead exposure. Each child found to be at risk for high lead exposure is screened or referred for lead screening.

If your child has not had routine well-child visits (since the age of one year) and you are concerned about lead exposure to your child, contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.

What Happened? What is Being Done?

The Village was informed that a homeowner was diagnosed with an elevated lead blood level, and promptly notified their engineering consultant and the Nassau County Department of Health (NCDOH). Investigations confirmed that there was no evidence of lead concentrations from the well facilities. It is recognized that effective corrosion control measures such as increasing pH levels, can be a key factor in managing lead concentrations. The Village immediately took this action and increased pH levels throughout the system as a corrosion control measure.

Subsequent to the elevated lead blood level incident, many residents had their water sampled through the NYS Pilot Lead Testing Program. These results were shared with the NCDOH and they requested that the Village conduct door to door notifications in the Mott section and offer free testing for lead. The results from this sampling indicated a high percentage of lead detections in the area. Although prior compliance monitoring indicated the Village had historically been in compliance with the state and federal regulations regarding lead corrosion, lead in service lines and other premise piping materials serving the sampled homes were the most likely sources of lead concentrations being detected.

Village of Garden City

Based on the elevated lead sample results, the Health Department rescinded the Village's reduced lead & copper monitoring requiring the Village to sample 60 residences every 6 months. The first 6-month monitoring period ending June 30, 2022, and subsequent periods, the most current ending on June 30, 2023, resulted in the 90th percentile being above the action level. The next 6-month sampling period is from July 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

The Village began a corrosion control study and submitted the findings to the NCDOH for review. The report recommended the addition of orthophosphate to line the mains and services mitigating any lead leaching. The Health Department issued an approval to the Village for the corrosion control study on July 24, 2022. The corrosion control treatment system has been constructed and has been operational since November 2022. The Village continues to monitor the effectiveness of the system through water quality sampling at homes that have known lead service lines.

If a resident wants to find out if they have a lead service line, the Village sent out a self-evaluation form to determine the material of the service entering your house. You may also request that the Village sample your water and we will drop off and pick up sample bottles for your use.

For More Information

Call us at (516) 465-4020 or visit our Web site at www.gardencity.net. For more information on lead in drinking water, contact the Nassau County Department of Health at (516) 227-9692 or by email at DOHOffice@nassaucountyny.gov, or the New York State Department of Health directly by calling the toll-free number (within New York State) 1-800-458-1158, extension 27650, or out of state at (518) 402-7650, or by email at bpwsp@health.state.ny.us. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/lead, or call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD.