



VILLAGE OF TREMONT

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Tremont found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. 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.

Tremont Trustees understand the concerns consumers might have when reading this information. Tremont is following IEPA procedures to make water quality adjustments and actively working to minimize the potential for lead corrosion. While changes are being implemented, we encourage all residents, especially pregnant women and children 6 years and younger, to run your water for at least 3 minutes prior to drinking if the water has not been used for several hours. The following presents more detailed information on lead and precautions you can take.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common, naturally occurring metal found throughout the environment. The primary sources of lead exposure for most children are deteriorating lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust, and lead-contaminated residential soil.

Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes, and lead is rarely present in drinking water coming from the water source. Tremont's source water is ground water taken from two wells located on the southeast side of town. Test results confirm the water leaving Tremont's water plant contains less than 1 part per billion (ppb) of lead. Lead in drinking water is from corrosion of materials in the water distribution system and household plumbing that contains lead. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder in the household plumbing.

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. Infants drinking formula prepared with lead-contaminated water are at a greater risk because of the large volume of water they drink relative to their body size.

How do I know if I am affected?

If your house was tested for lead and lead levels were found above the action level, you have already been notified by Village staff of precautions to minimize exposure. If your house was constructed prior to 1986 and you are unsure if your water service line is made of lead, you can conduct the following test.

Find out whether your service line is made of lead:

To determine the type of material of the service pipe on your property, check your household water service connection which is typically located in your basement. A home without a basement may have a utility room where the water service piping enters your home. The tools needed to perform the test are minor: a flathead screwdriver or coin and a refrigerator magnet.

- Step 1: Locate the water service pipe coming into your home (usually in the basement). A shut-off valve and the water meter are installed on the pipe after the point of entry into the building.
- Step 2: Identify a test area on the pipe between the point where it comes into the building and the shut-off valve. If the pipe is covered or wrapped, expose a small area of metal.
- Step 3: Use the flat edge of a screwdriver or coin to scratch through any corrosion that might have built up on the outside of the pipe. If the scratched area is shiny and silver, your service line may be lead. The magnet will not stick to a lead pipe.

If you determine that your water service may be lead and you want to find out if your tap water contains lead, you can have the water tested by a certified laboratory. Lead testing costs approximately \$20 to \$30 per sample. Feel free to contact the Village Hall at the number listed at the end of this document for information on how to contact a certified laboratory for testing.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Your Exposure to Lead in Your Water

If the level of lead found in your drinking water is above 15 ppb ($\mu\text{g/L}$) or, if you are concerned about the lead levels at your location, there are several things you can do:

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water from your kitchen tap or whatever tap you use for drinking and cooking for **at least 3 minutes** and it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. This will help flush lead-containing water from the pipes. To conserve water, you can fill multiple containers after flushing for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.
- **Bottled drinking water should be used by pregnant women, breast-feeding women, young children, and formula-fed infants** at homes where lead has been detected at levels greater than 15 ppb.
- **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.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- **Use water filters or treatment devices.** Point of use treatment for removal of lead is available. Any type of water treatment device that you choose should meet National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) standards. For lead removal, filters must be certified to meet NSF Standard 53, and the filter package should specifically list the device as certified for removing the contaminant lead.
- Should you have any concerns about lead effecting your children, **have your child's blood tested** and evaluated by a physician.

- **Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.** New brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as “lead-free,” may contribute lead to drinking water. 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.) Consumers should be aware of this when choosing fixtures and take appropriate precautions.

What Happened? What is Being Done?

The Illinois EPA requires routine and regular testing of all public water systems. One of those tests is for the presence of lead. The sampling and testing process is very detailed and structured to find water samples with lead concentrations higher than a specified level. Tremont's previous test results completed in 2013 were below the threshold levels for preventative measures. Because the 2016 testing results have exceeded the threshold level for lead, preventative measures are being taken to reduce the concentration of lead in the tap water. Sampling and testing will now be performed every six months to monitor the results of corrective actions.

The following actions are being investigated and corrective measures will be implemented as soon as possible.

1. Hardness and acidity of water have an impact on the corrosive nature of the water. Soft water tends to extract lead and copper from the system. Acidic water also extracts lead and copper from the system. Managing these levels is an ongoing effort and adjustments are being made.
2. Corrosion control treatments added to the water system to create a protective coating on pipe materials are commonly used in water systems where lead concentrations exceed the threshold level. Tremont is taking steps to implement an Optimal Corrosion Control Treatment program.

For more information, you can call Village Hall at (309) 925-5711. A public meeting will be held very soon to discuss this material and answer any questions you might have about Tremont's water system. You can also find more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, by visiting the USEPA Web site at www.epa.gov/lead and contacting your health care provider.

Tremont is mailing this document to all water billing customers and delivering this notice to all sensitive groups in the Village such as daycares, preschools, elementary schools and pediatricians.