Notice to Affected Household - Sample Templates

**Sample template for public water system to send notice to households of their lead results.**

For households where the public water system becomes aware of a household’s lead sample result and that sample result and the 90th percentile value for the public water system are greater than 15 ppb.

**Instructions:** Fill in the correct case-specific information in sections marked with brackets. EPA recommends that you remove the brackets and de-italicize the text before distributing the letter. Sections in italics are required. These include:

* A clear explanation of the potential adverse effects on human health of drinking water that contains a concentration of lead that exceeds the lead action level;
* The steps that the owner or operator of the public water system is taking to mitigate the concentration of lead; and
* The necessity of seeking alternative water supplies until the date on which the concentration of lead is mitigated.

For more information, refer to EPA’s website at <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/strategic-plan-targeted-outreach-populations-affected-lead>.

**Important Information About Your Drinking Water**

**Lead Sample Results for Your Home**

Dear [Consumer's Name],

EPA has provided us with information regarding a lead sample of drinking water taken at your home. This sample was collected by [sampler information] on [sample date]. The sample shows lead levels that are greater than the lead action level of 15 ppb. The 90th percentile value of all the samples collected throughout our entire water system for compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule is also greater than the lead action level. [Water System] strongly urges you to take the steps listed on the next page to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water.

The following table shows the results of the water sample:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sample Collected** | **Lab Results Received** | **Lead Test Results** | **Action Level at 90th Percentile Level** | **MCLG** |
| [Date] | [Date] | [x]ppb | 15 ppb | 0 ppb |

**What Does This Mean?**

Drinking water that is tested for lead is compared to standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These standards include:

* **90th percentile value:** The value that separates the bottom 90 percent of sample results from the top 10percent.
* **Action Level:** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. Under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the EPA set the action level for lead in drinking water at 15 ppb. Water systems are required to act if the sample results are greater than 15 ppb in more 10 percent of the samples collected for compliance.
* **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG):** 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. Because lead may pose serious health risks, the EPA set an MCLG of 0 ppb for lead.

**How Does Lead Enter Drinking Water?**

Lead is a toxic heavy metal that is harmful if inhaled or swallowed. It can be found in air, soil, dust, food, drinking water and products such as lead-based paints.

Lead typically enters drinking water through plumbing materials. All homes, regardless of their age, may have plumbing that contains lead. However, homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures, and solder. 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.” Brass faucets and fittings and lead solder can leach lead into water, especially hot water.

***What Are the Health Effects of Lead?***

*Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters the body from drinking water or other sources of lead. Pregnant women, infants, and young children have the highest risks of negative health effects from lead exposure. Lead exposure in children under the age of six has been linked to damage to the central and peripheral nervous system, learning disabilities, shorter stature, impaired hearing, impaired formation and function of blood cells, and lowered IQ. Lead can accumulate in our bodies over time, where it is stored in bones along with calcium. During pregnancy, lead is released from bones as maternal calcium and is used to help form the bones of the fetus. This can result in serious effects to the mother and her developing fetus, including reduced growth of the fetus and premature birth.*

*Adults exposed to lead could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure. Lead is stored in the bones and can be released later in life.*

*If you are concerned about lead exposure, you may want to ask your health care provider about testing children to determine the levels of lead in their blood.*

**How Can I Reduce Exposure to Lead from Drinking Water?**

As a concerned resident, there are several steps that you can take to reduce your and your family’s exposure to lead from drinking water. [Water System] recommends that you:

* **Run your water to flush out lead.** The longer water sits in your home piping; the more lead may leach from lead-containing fixtures. Before drinking, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes [or insert flushing recommendations that have been approved by your state primacy agency for your community].
* **Use cold water to cook and to prepare 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. Remember, **boiling water DOES NOT remove lead** from water.
* **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures that contain lead.** 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. Plumbing materials that are lead free can also be identified by looking for lead free certification marks (http://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi?Dockey=P100LVYK.txt).
* **Consider using a filter certified for lead removal.** Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead. Verify the claims of manufacturers by checking with independent certifying organizations that provide lists of treatment devices that they have certified.
* **Regularly clean faucet aerators**. Aerators, the screens at the end of faucets, can collect debris. Rinse out collected materials to reduce debris accumulation.
* ***Use an alternative source.*** *Until the concentration of lead in drinking water is mitigated, you should use a different source of drinking water (i.e. bottled water).*
* **Periodically re-test your water for lead.** Call [Water System] at [phone number] to find out how to get your water tested for lead. [Include information on your water system's testing program. For example, do you provide free testing? Are there labs in your area that are certified to do lead in water testing?]

***What Steps Is My Water System Taking?***

*Because the 90th percentile value for the water system is above the action level, [Water System] is actively working to mitigate the problem. We are taking the following steps to keep your drinking water safe:*

* ***Increased sampling****: We [are beginning/will begin] sampling for lead every 6 months so we can closely monitor the lead levels in our water system. Your continued participation and support in our lead tap monitoring program is very important.*
* ***Public Education campaign****: We [have initiated/will initiate] a public education campaign to ensure all our customers know about the water system 90th percentile value exceeding the action level, the health effects of lead, the sources of lead in drinking water, and actions they can take to reduce exposure to leads in drinking water.*
* ***Source water monitoring****: We [have conducted/will conduct] monitoring in our source water to ensure that lead is not entering our water system from the source water.*
* ***Corrosivity control****: We will [initiate controls/improve on our controls] to reduce the corrosivity of our water. Corrosive water can cause lead to leach from plumbing materials that contain lead.*
* ***[Lead service line replacement****: We will initiate lead service line replacement programs in our water system.****]***
* *[Insert additional steps that your system is taking here.]*

*Although we are acting to reduce lead levels, your elevated lead level may also be due to conditions unique to your home such as the presence of lead soldier or brass faucets, fittings, and valves that may contain lead. Please see the strategies listed on the previous page to reduce lead exposure.*

**Contact Information**

Please contact [Water System] with questions at [phone number], [email address], or [mailing address]. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/lead, call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or contact your health care provider.

Translations for English Instructions

The translations below are examples state or public water systems may use. The translations are included in the *Preparing Your Drinking Water Consumer Confidence Report Guidance for Water Suppliers*. Translations are provided courtesy of the State of Washington Department of Health. None of these translations has been independently verified.





