What is Lead?

Lead is a naturally occurring element found in small amounts in the earth’s crust. While it has some beneficial uses, it can be toxic to humans and animals causing health effects.

Lead in Drinking Water

Lead can enter drinking water through corrosion of plumbing materials, especially where the water has high acidity or low mineral content that corrodes pipes and fixtures.

Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder. However, new homes are also at risk: even legally “lead-free” plumbing may contain up to eight percent lead.

Beginning January 2014, changes to the Safe Drinking Water Act further reduced the maximum allowable lead content of pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings, and fixtures to 0.25 percent. The most common problem is with brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and fixtures with lead solder, from which significant amounts of lead can enter into the water, especially hot water.

Corrosion is a dissolving or wearing away of metal caused by a chemical reaction between water and your plumbing. A number of factors are involved in the extent to which lead enters the water including the chemistry of the water (acidity and alkalinity), the amount of lead it comes into contact with, how long the water stays in the plumbing materials, and the presence of protective scales or coatings inside the plumbing materials.

To address corrosion of lead and copper into drinking water, EPA issued the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The LCR requires corrosion control treatment to prevent lead and copper from contaminating the drinking water.
The North Park Public Water District is required to notify customers whenever water mains, water service lines, or water meters are repaired or replaced of the possibility that the work being performed could result in the disturbance of sediment, possibly containing lead that could get into the water.

Customers are advised to flush their water lines once the work is completed, including removing and cleaning faucet aerator screens.

**It is important to note**

**NO lead service lines** are known to be present in our service area. The NPPWD has collected hundreds of samples and tested them for lead in accordance with the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and has never experienced a result above the Federal Action Level.

**Why you should care about lead exposure**

The U.S. EPA has determined that lead can cause significant health problems if it accumulates in a person’s body over time.

While lead in tap water is rarely the single cause of lead poisoning, it can increase a person’s total lead exposure. High levels of lead in your household drinking water can have significant health impacts, especially for children and pregnant women.

**Sources of lead**

Lead isn’t present in the water the NPPWD sends to your house, but lead can get into water as it moves through lead-containing household plumbing and service lines. Since the NPPWD is unaware of any lead service lines in our service area, the remaining locations where lead can enter the water are from copper pipes installed prior to 1986 where lead solder and lead based flux was used and lead contained in some brass water faucets.

Learn About Lead

[www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)

Information about the risks associated with lead in drinking water is available at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency website indicated above.

Contact Us

North Park Public Water District
1350 Turret Drive
Machesney Park, Illinois 61115
(815) 633-5461

Visit us on the web: [www.northparkwater.org](http://www.northparkwater.org)