

Special Announcement



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Goddard Space Flight Center
Wallops Flight Facility
Wallops Island, Virginia 23337

Date: October 25, 2022

Subject: IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Consumer Notice for 2022 Triennial Tap Water Results (September 2022) Wallops Flight Facility, Mainland/Island

NASA Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) operates two drinking water systems that provide drinking water throughout the Main Base and Wallops Mainland/Island locations. This announcement is to report the triennial lead and copper results from samples collected prior to filtration at five WFF Island buildings in September 2022. The reported results are presented in the table below. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Action Level for lead is 0.015 milligrams per liter (mg/L) and the EPA Action Level for copper is 1.3 mg/L. The EPA Action Levels for lead and copper were not exceeded.

2022 Triennial Mainland/Island Tap Water Lead and Copper Results			
Sample Location	Sample Date	Copper (mg/L)	Lead (mg/L)
U-30	09/20/2022	0.250	< 0.002
U-55	09/20/2022	0.0262	0.00437
W-40	09/20/2022	0.136	< 0.002
W-65	09/20/2022	0.0743	< 0.002
Y-55	09/20/2022	0.125	0.00885

The “<” symbol indicates a concentration below the detection capability of the laboratory.

The 90th percentile concentrations for lead and copper from this sampling event are 0.00661 mg/L and 0.193 mg/L, respectively.

Definitions

Under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the EPA set the Action Level for lead in drinking water at 0.015 mg/L. This means utilities must ensure that water from the customer’s tap does not exceed this level in at least 90 percent of the locations sampled (this is referred to as the 90th percentile value). The Action Level is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

Because lead may pose serious health risks, the EPA also set a Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) for lead of zero. 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.

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

Lead may work its way into drinking water after the water entered the distribution system and is on its way to consumers taps. This usually happens through the corrosion of materials containing lead in household plumbing. These materials include brass faucets, lead solder on copper pipes, lead pipes, or lead service lines connecting the water main to the inside plumbing. Lead pipes are no longer installed for service lines or in household plumbing and lead solder has been outlawed in Virginia since 1985. If you live in a building in which the inside plumbing contains lead-based materials, there are several steps you can take to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water.

1. **Run your water to flush out lead.** If water hasn't been used for several hours, allow the water to run at the tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using it for drinking or cooking. This action flushes the lead-containing water from the pipes. The water you run from drinking water taps does not have to be wasted. You can use this water for cleaning purposes or for watering plants. You may want to keep a container of drinking water in your refrigerator, so you don't have to run water every time you need it.
2. **Use water from the cold water tap for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap, lead dissolves more easily in hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.
3. **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce or remove lead.
4. **Consider installing a filter.** You may want to consider installing a water filter. Ensure that the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact the National Sanitation Foundation at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for these types of water filters. If you choose to install a lead removal filter, be sure to maintain and replace the filter in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality.
5. **Get your child tested.** Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child's blood tested for lead if you are concerned about exposure.
6. **Identify and replace any plumbing fixtures that contain lead.** Brass faucets, fittings, and valves manufactured *before January 4, 2014*, may contribute lead to drinking water, including those advertised as "lead-free." Under current law, "lead free" means no more than 0.2% lead in solder and flux, and 0.25% lead for pipe, pipe fittings, and components. Visit the National Sanitation Foundation Web site at www.nsf.org to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.
7. **Test your water for lead.** Call us at (757) 824-1987 to find out how to get your water tested for lead.

Copper

Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the EPA Action Level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the EPA Action Level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal doctor.

For More Information

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact T.J. Meyer, Deputy Division Chief, Medical and Environmental Management Division, at 757-824-1987 or theodore.j.meyer@nasa.gov.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead:

1. Visit EPA’s website at <http://www.epa.gov/lead>;
2. Visit VDH’s website at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/leadsafe>;
3. Contact your health care provider;
4. Contact the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD.

This notice is brought to you by NASA Wallops Flight Facility. State Water System ID# 3001535.

David A. Reth
Director of Management Operations

Signature

Date

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