
**The York Water Company
130 East Market Street
York, PA 17401**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

York Water Update on Lead:

Will send customers a pamphlet with important information about lead in drinking water

(November 28, 2016) York, Pennsylvania — This is an update of York Water’s lead testing program. As announced last month, recent testing has found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings in York, particularly those homes with lead service lines built before 1935. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Even if you do not have a pre-1935 home, lead may enter the drinking water from various sources in your plumbing and all our customers will be receiving an informative Lead Information pamphlet over the next few weeks to help answer any questions they may have.

The water that leaves York Water’s filter plant does not contain lead. Lead can get into a property’s drinking water because of a lead service line, leaded solder in a property, or lead in plumbing fixtures. York Water stopped installing lead service lines in 1934.

Although the primary source of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person’s potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water.

“We take lead very seriously,” said Jeffrey Hines, President and CEO of The York Water Company. “While this routine sample testing exceeded the action level by only 1 part per billion, York Water has instituted an expedited plan to speed up the replacement process of the last remaining York Water lead service lines in our service area. In addition, we are educating all of our customers on other potential sources of lead in their plumbing by providing them with an informational pamphlet in their water bills over the next month.”

The York Water Company completed its triennial lead and copper testing in accordance with DEP and EPA guidelines and is reporting an increase in lead in a limited number of customers’ water. The test of 50 high-risk homes allows 5 samples to exceed the action level of 15 parts per billion (PPB). Routine testing found that six properties with lead service lines exceeded the action level. The testing showed that a small portion of the houses built before 1935 with lead service lines were the ones that exceeded the action level.

As of 2016, only about 3% of York Water customers — approximately 1,660 properties — still had company-owned lead service lines. York Water has sent informational letters to these customers explaining how they can reduce lead in their water, get a free water test, and get an update on York’s lead service line replacement plan. York Water will provide these homes a credit for 200 gallons per month for flushing, and schedule replacement of the full lead service line, without charge to the customer, over the next 3 to 4 years.

“As a community partner for more than 200 years, York Water is committed to addressing lead in our community, which is why we’ve been consistently making improvements to service lines over the past 25 years,” added Hines. While water that leaves our filter plant and passes through our water mains does not contain lead, properties served by lead service lines older than 1935, including pipes owned by the property owner, and other sources of leaded plumbing may contribute to increased lead levels.”

Going above and beyond the requirements by the DEP, York Water is committing to a goal of: replacing all of the company-owned and the attached customer-owned lead services within 4 years at no charge to the customer; by providing those customers with a 200 gallon flushing credit; and offering free water testing for those customers.

Customers who are not sure if they have a lead service line may visit www.YorkWater.com and click on Lead Information to enter their account number and find out if their property has a company-owned lead service line. If you live in an apartment that was built before 1935, and do not pay the water bill, you should contact your landlord. York Water’s website also shows how a customer with a home built before 1935 can check their plumbing to see if they have a customer-owned lead service line and steps they should take to reduce lead.

All customers’ properties that have been tested have already been notified of their results. Those that exceeded the action level were sent information and a contact number at York Water to discuss ways to reduce lead in their drinking water using recommended flushing processes. York Water has also initiated discussions with those customers for full lead line replacement.

According to the EPA lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources, especially for pregnant women and children 6 years or younger. It can cause damage to the brain and kidney, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. 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.

If a water test indicates that the drinking water drawn from a tap contains lead above 15 ppb, or if you would like to reduce potential lead at your tap, then you should take the following precautions:

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** Run water for 15-30 seconds to flush lead from interior plumbing. If you have a lead service line, running the water for at least 3 minutes (about 3 gallons) if the water lines have not been used for more than 6 hours
- **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.**
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- **Look for alternative drinking water sources or treatment of water.**
- **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures containing lead.**
- **Have an electrician check to see if wires are improperly grounded to your pipe.**
- **Your family doctor or pediatrician can test your child’s blood level for lead and provide information on the health effects of lead.**

For more information on lead in the water or to see if a property has a Lead Service Line, please visit www.yorkwater.com to find out how to get your water tested for lead or for more information on steps York Water is taking to address the lead action level exceedance. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA’s website at www.epa.gov/lead or contact your health care provider.

####