



A Guide to Managing Lead in Your Drinking Water

The City of Appleton treats, tests, and distributes high quality drinking water to you and the community. Water provided by the City of Appleton is lead-free when it leaves our treatment plant. City owned water mains distribute water throughout the community from the treatment plant. After water leaves the city water main, its quality may change as the water flows through the water service lines, in-home plumbing, and fixtures that may contain lead. The City of Appleton takes the issue of lead in drinking water very seriously. Please review this fact sheet to help you identify potential sources of lead in your home, learn how lead can affect your health and, most importantly, how to maintain high quality water and reduce exposure to lead.

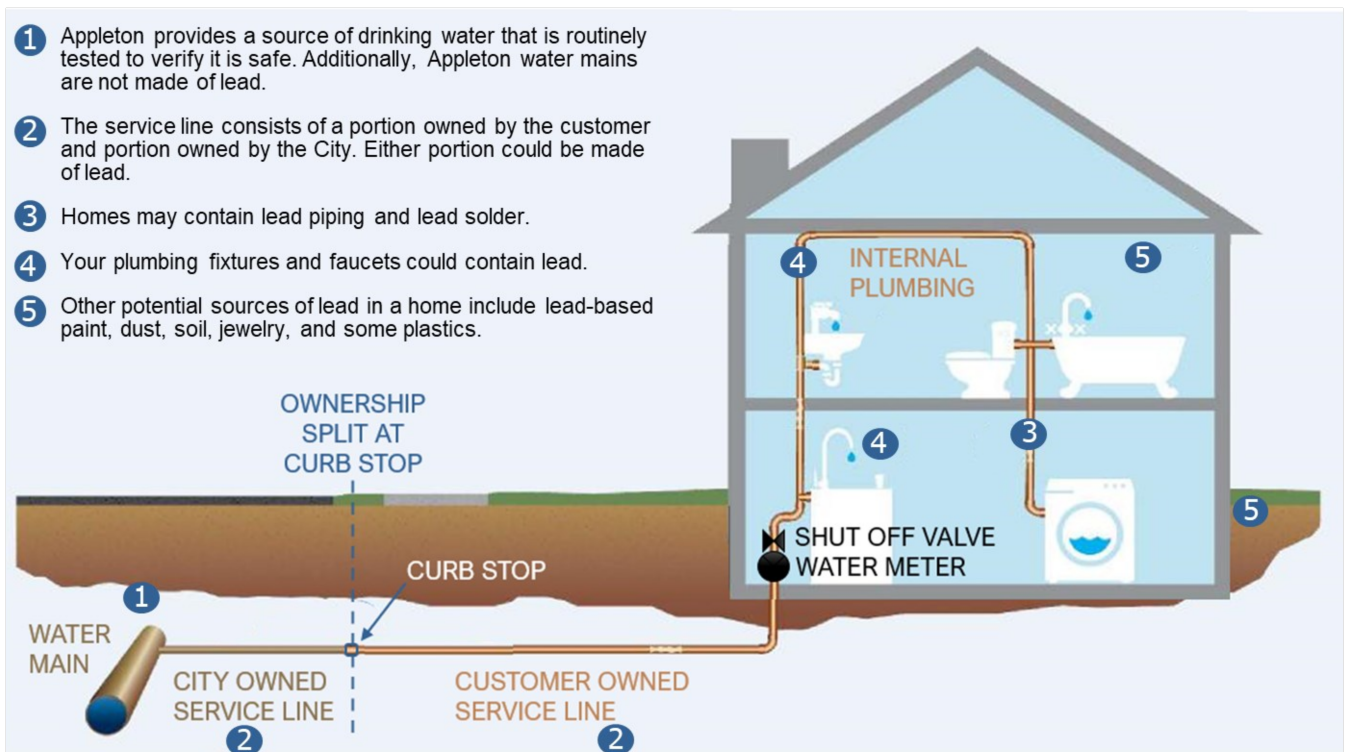
Potential Sources of Lead

Lead is a naturally occurring material used in many residential and industrial products, meaning we may be exposed to it at work or at home. Historically, lead was considered a good material for plumbing because it easily forms into different shapes and resists leaks. For this reason, many homes may have lead-containing service lines, plumbing, and kitchen or bath fixtures. Lead may also be found in paint and other products, especially in older homes. See the illustration below for more information.

Exposure to Lead Can Affect Your Health

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.

- 1 Appleton provides a source of drinking water that is routinely tested to verify it is safe. Additionally, Appleton water mains are not made of lead.
- 2 The service line consists of a portion owned by the customer and portion owned by the City. Either portion could be made of lead.
- 3 Homes may contain lead piping and lead solder.
- 4 Your plumbing fixtures and faucets could contain lead.
- 5 Other potential sources of lead in a home include lead-based paint, dust, soil, jewelry, and some plastics.



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Simple Tips

to reduce lead exposure in your home

- 1 Test your water** if you are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Tests should be performed by a state certified laboratory.
- 2 Inspect your in-home water treatment devices** and water softeners; they may increase lead levels in your water. Consult the manufacturer about how the device may affect your drinking water or plumbing. Avoid drinking softened water, as metals from your pipes are more likely to dissolve in soft water than in hard water.
- 3 Filter your water.** Use a water filter that is NSF 53 certified for lead removal. Many filters and filter systems can improve water quality and taste in other ways too. Visit nsf.org for more information.
- 4 Use cold tap water** for drinking and preparing food. Hot water is more likely to contain lead than cold water.
- 5 Flush your tap for at least 5 minutes before drinking or cooking if the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than 6 hours.** However, the amount of time to run the water will depend on whether your home has a lead service line or not, and the length of the lead service line. If you have a known lead service line and your house is set far back from the curb, you may need to flush for longer than 5 minutes. To conserve water, save the water from flushing the tap for watering plants or doing dishes. After flushing, use the water for cooking or drinking, or save it for later use by filling pitchers.
- 6 Install lead-free faucets and fixtures** that are certified to contain no lead. Look for lead certification marks indicating the new product is lead free, and then replace old faucets and fixtures. Visit nepis.epa.gov and search for lead free certification for more information.
- 7 Remove faucet aerators and flush** cold water taps regularly. Aerators can collect particles from lead plumbing and should be removed and cleaned on a regular basis. It is especially important after household plumbing work and repairs. After removing the aerator, flush the cold water lines for 5 minutes.

For more information...

The City of Appleton is committed and working hard to provide a safe source of drinking water to its customers. Because property owners in Appleton own a portion of their water service lines, there is a shared responsibility to manage lead exposure. We are ready to work with you to answer your questions about water quality and help reduce lead exposure.

Please use these resources for more information:

- **City of Appleton website** – information and helpful tips on lead in drinking water: www.appleton.org/government/public-works/lead-service-program
- **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources** – information on lead in drinking water: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/DrinkingWater/lead.html>
- **United States Environmental Protection Agency** – resources to understand and reduce lead exposure: epa.gov/lead
- **Lead Hotline** – Contact the National Lead Information Center's hotline at 1 (800) 424-LEAD [5323]



Please contact us with questions and for more information.

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