

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

*St. Elmo Water- Facility #0510250 found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious problems, especially for pregnant women and children 6 years and younger. Please read this notice closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.*

### 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.*

### Sources of Lead

The primary sources of lead exposure for most children are deteriorating lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust, and lead-contaminated residential soil. Exposure to lead is a significant health concern, especially for young children and infants whose growing bodies tend to absorb more lead than the average adult. **Infants that drink formula prepared with lead-contaminated water are at a greater risk because of the large volume of water they drink relative to their body size.** Lead is rarely found in source water, but enters tap water through corrosion of plumbing materials. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder.

### Steps You Can Take To Reduce Your Exposure To Lead In Your Water

**If the level of lead found in your drinking water is above 15 ppb or** if you are concerned about the lead levels at your location, there are several things you can do:

- ***Run your water to flush out lead.*** If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water from your kitchen tap or whatever you use for drinking and cooking for **at least 3 minutes** and it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. This will help flush lead-containing water from the pipes. In order to conserve water, you can fill multiple containers after flushing for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.
- ***Bottled drinking water should be used by pregnant women, breast-feeding women, young children, and formula-fed infants at homes where lead has been detected at levels greater than 15 ppb.***
- ***Use cold water for drinking, cooking, and preparing 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.
- ***Do not boil water to remove lead.*** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- ***Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.***
- ***Test your water for lead.*** Call us at the number below to find out how to get your water tested for lead.
- ***Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.*** New brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free", may contribute lead to drinking water. As of June 19, 1986, new or replaced water service lines and new household plumbing materials could not contain more than 8% lead. Lead content was further reduced on January 4, 2014, when plumbing materials must now be certified as "lead-free" to be used (weighted average of wetted surface cannot be more than 0.25% lead). Consumers should be aware of this when choosing fixtures and take appropriate precautions.

**What Happened? What is Being Done?**

The cause of the lead levels detected in 2018 is not known. There were no lead levels detected at these sample sites in 2015.

The water department will continue to sample for lead and assist homeowners in identifying possible sources of lead within their homes. There are no lead service lines that we are aware of. There could be lead in some plumbing fixtures in private homes; however, the water department has no record of them.

For Information Call: City Hall @ 618-829-3319. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead) or contact your health care provider.

City of St. Elmo Water Dept. distributed December 11, 2019

FIRST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ST. ELMO  
IL 62458  
PERMIT NO. 11

City of St. Elmo  
411 N. Main St.  
St. Elmo, IL 62458