# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

The Winhall-Stratton Fire District #1 water system (Water System ID # 5305) found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

**What Does a Lead Action Level Exceedance Mean?**

Under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set the action level for lead in drinking water at 15 ppb. This means utilities must ensure that lead in water from the customer's tap does not exceed this level in at least 90 percent of the sites sampled (90th percentile value). The action level is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow, including distributing this information. The most recent round of sampling performed on August 30, 2022 resulted in a 90$^{th}$ percentile level of 35 ppb for lead, which is an action level exceedance.

**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. Contact your local health department or healthcare provider for information on testing your child's blood for lead.

**Sources of Lead**

The primary sources of lead exposure are deteriorating lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the workplace and exposure from certain hobbies (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes).

Lead is rarely found in a water system's surface or groundwater source, but may enter drinking water if plumbing materials such as solder or fixtures, including some made of chrome or brass, contain lead and corrode. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have plumbing, solder, and fixtures that contain lead. EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water can receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

**Steps You Can Take to Reduce Your Exposure to Lead In Your Water**

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** Run water for 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. (The samples the water system is required to collect for testing must be taken after the water was sitting in the pipes for at least 6 hours, known as "first-draw" samples.)
- **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Lead dissolves more easily into hot water.

- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- **Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.** You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. FDA set a limit for lead in bottled water of 5 ppb. Not all water filters remove lead. Check the product for independent testing from a group such as NSF International (NSF.org, 800-673-8010) that verifies a specific model of filter removes lead.
- **Test your water for lead.** Call us at the phone number below to find out how to get your water tested for lead by a certified laboratory. Results may differ between first-draw water and water collected after the tap has been flushed.
- **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures that contain lead.** The amount of lead allowed in plumbing solder and fixtures has been reduced by several state and federal laws over the last few decades.

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

The water system has

- ☒ no known lead service lines
- ☐ full or partial lead service lines in some areas
- ☐ lead "gooseneck" or "pigtail" connections to service lines in some areas

The water system

- ☒ has chemical treatment to reduce corrosion
- ☐ does not have corrosion control treatment

Additional information:

Increased monitoring is will be conducted as required. The system already utilizes corrosion control as per approved by the State. Please read the information above carefully, run your water to flush your lines and consider replacing older plumbing and fixtures that may have lead based solder.

**For More Information**

**Call us at** 802-297-9590 **or visit our web site (if available) at**

www.wsfd1.com

For more information on reducing lead exposure and the health effects of lead, visit the U.S. EPA website www.epa.gov/lead or call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-5323 or call your health care provider.

For information about the Lead and Copper Rule, contact the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division website http://dec.vermont.gov/water/ (search for Lead and Copper Rule) or call 802-585-4891.

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