IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

The city of New Brighton has found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health 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 elevated levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones and can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead form the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are 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 work place and exposure from certain hobbies. Lead can be carried on clothing or shoes.)

Our current source of water is the city of Minneapolis. When water leaves the Minneapolis treatment facility, it does not have a detectable amount of lead. **The city of New Brighton's water distribution system contains no lead in the pipes or fittings. New Brighton has no lead service lines connecting the water main to plumbing inside the home.**

The most likely source of lead in household water is plumbing in the home. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead. Newer homes may also have lead; even "lead-free" plumbing may contain some lead. When water is in contact with pipes or plumbing that contains lead for several hours, lead may enter the drinking water.

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 lead exposure to lead from drinking water.

Don't forget about other sources of lead such as lead paint, lead dust, and lead in soil. Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead.

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

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** Run water for 30 – 60 seconds or until it becomes cold or it reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking, if it hasn't been used for several hours. This flushes lead-containing water from the pipes.
- **Use cold water for 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 drinking water sources or treatment of water.** You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter devise in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality.
- **Test your water for lead.** Call us at 651-638-2114 to find out how to get your water tested for lead. The City currently samples 60 locations throughout the city every 6 months. Be sure if you are on the City's sampling program to provide your samples when notified. If you would like to test your own homes water, the following MDH web site can help you locate a certified lab to get a sample container and instructions on how to submit a sample: https://eldo.web.health.state.mn.us/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam Generally these tests will cost about $20 - $30.
- **Get your child tested.** Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead if you are concerned about exposure.
- **Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.** Before 2014, the law allowed plumbing pipes, fittings, and fixtures such as faucets to contain up to 8% lead and be labeled as "lead free." Before 1986, there was no limitation to lead content in plumbing. Consider having older metal plumbing materials, especially brass, replaced with newer "lead free" materials by a licensed plumber.

What Happened? What is Being Done?

Since July 2016, New Brighton has used water provided by the City of Minneapolis, which is surface water. Before July 2016, New Brighton's water came from its groundwater wells. The difference in water characteristics with this change could be capable of removing some of the naturally-occurring mineral deposits that have formed over the years inside our homes' plumbing. This could expose plumbing connections or fixtures containing lead, making them more susceptible to corrosion.

The water coming from the Minneapolis treatment facility tests "No Detect" for lead. Also, the city of New Brighton's water distribution system contains no lead in the pipes or fittings. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead. New homes may also have lead; even "lead-free" plumbing may contain some lead. When water is in contact with pipes (or service lines) and/or plumbing that contains lead for several hours, the lead may enter the drinking water.

Although most households and businesses tested in New Brighton in 2018 have not experienced elevated lead levels, if present, sustained elevated levels of lead in drinking water can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with home service lines and home plumbing. The City does not have any lead service lines leading to residences or businesses, but lead used in some home plumbing components can present problems. The City is responsible for providing high quality drinking water throughout its distribution system, however it cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components inside of homes. In certain situations, some water characteristics can cause interactions with certain plumbing components, which will dissolve small amounts of lead. The risk associated with this lead can typically be substantially reduced by simply running the water (and thus flushing the pipes) for a short time before use.

New Brighton has been proactive in minimizing lead exposure risk. Anticipating the potential for increased lead and copper levels with the source water change in 2016, the MDH increased its lead and copper monitoring schedule and the quantity of samples required during each sampling event. The City has also worked independently to sample for lead and copper.

In preparation for the source water change in 2016, the City met with MDH and City of Minneapolis officials to discuss potential water quality changes associated with the switchover. MDH recommended that New Brighton begin injecting a corrosion prevention substance (orthophosphate) into its water supply for two months prior to the switchover. The purpose of this preventive substance is to form a thin protective coating on the interior of the City's distribution lines and household plumbing systems to minimize corrosion. This is the same substance that Minneapolis uses for corrosion control in its system. The City has continued to inject orthophosphate through the present day, and will continue to do so throughout the switchover back to groundwater.

For More Information

Call us at 651-638-2114 or visit our web site at www.newbrightonmn.gov. 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 or contact your health care provider.

This notice is brought to you by the city of New Brighton. State Water System ID#1620009 May 21, 2018