

Is There Lead in Stow Water

There is no detectable lead in the treated water that leaves the City of Akron Water Treatment Plant and is brought into the City of Stow through its two pumping stations. There is also no lead in the water delivered to your home through the distribution system.

The City of Akron has had a comprehensive corrosion control program as part of its treatment process for over thirty years. The special corrosion inhibitor used, *zinc orthophosphate*, is continuously added to treated water. This inhibitor makes the water less corrosive and creates a coating inside the pipes. This serves as a barrier between the two and prevents conditions that can cause lead to leach into the water.

Beginning in the early 1950's, the use of lead in water service lines was abandoned in favor of using copper pipe. The City of Stow water system, from the mid 1950's until the late 1970's, was under the ownership/control of the City of Akron. From the late 1970's until late 2001, the system was under the ownership/control of Summit County. The City of Stow purchased and took control of the system in November of 2001. Throughout its existence, all available records indicate no use of lead in any service piping installed in the system.

Lead can enter your water system in other ways, namely interior plumbing and fixtures. Lead solders were banned in 1986, though not adopted by the Ohio Plumbing Code until 1998. The lead content was again lowered in 2014. The likelihood of lead leaching from fixtures and joints, and entering the drinking water, rises when water sits in plumbing for long periods of time, such as overnight or during workday hours.

There are several ways you can reduce your exposure to lead in your water. The most effective way is to run your tap for at least 30 seconds if it has not been used in six hours or more. You will know the water is coming from the City's mainline as it will feel colder after running. This assures the pipes are flushed. Keeping faucet aerators clean, at least every few months, also assures any particles from pipes or solder are removed.

Lead dissolves more easily in hot water so it is best to cook, drink, or make baby formula with cold water. Boiling will not remove lead from water. Periodic flushing of your hot water tank is also recommended. A final suggestion would be to check the grounding wire of your home electrical service. Grounding in this way may cause pipes to corrode more. Check with a licensed electrician to see if this can be relocated.

All U.S. water operators are required to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act, including the Lead and Copper Rule. Lead is a common, natural metal found throughout the environment and is used in many commercial products. Exposure to lead can be harmful and a build-up in the body can cause brain or kidney damage, or interfere with red blood cell production. At greatest risk are infants, young children, and pregnant women. For these individuals, using a water filter, designed to remove lead, is recommended.

The City of Stow has been conducting the required thirty (30) lead samples since the start of testing in 1992. All results from these tests have always been well below the EPA limits.