



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Lead and Copper Sampling Results Available for Many Pennsylvania Water Systems**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Results of water sampling for lead and copper for public water systems are now available on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website. More than 2,800 water systems were required to test for the 2016 monitoring period, with less than 5% reporting an exceedance of the lead or copper action levels.

Water systems are required to sample the water from consumer's homes on a specific frequency, which is either every 6-months, annually or triennially (once every 3 years). An action level exceedance occurs if the results from more than 10% of the homes tested are above the action level, which is 15 parts per billion (ppb) for lead and 1.3 parts per million (ppm) for copper.

There are 3,154 total community and non-community, non-transient water systems in Pennsylvania. Of the 2,859 public water systems required to conduct testing in 2016, 11 exceeded both the lead and copper action levels, 79 exceeded only the lead action level, and 42 exceeded only the copper action level. Both the individual results and the compliance values are available on the Drinking Water Reporting System website (with instructions for how to search this data) at: <http://www.drinkingwater.state.pa.us/>.

Residents served by systems that have had an exceedance can expect to be notified within 60 days by their water supplier. Water systems that have exceeded the action level for lead or copper will be required to sample again every six months until there have been two consecutive sampling rounds below the action level.

Lead exposure in drinking water typically comes from plumbing fixtures and not the source of the water supply. Residents that are concerned about lead and copper in drinking water – either from public water systems or well water - should take the following steps to reduce possible exposure.

- **Run water to flush out lead and copper.** If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes out any stagnant water in your home plumbing and replaces it with fresh water from the water main in your street.
- **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead and copper dissolve 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 or copper.** Boiling water will not reduce lead or copper. In fact, lead or copper concentrations will be higher in water that is boiled since some of the water is removed as steam.
- **Test water for lead or copper.** Contact the water system for more information about obtaining water testing. Some water systems may offer to test its customers' water free of

charge. The water system can also provide information about local laboratories that conduct lead testing. Private well water users should contact a DEP-accredited lab for information about water testing. Here is the link to a listing of [DEP-accredited labs](#).

- **Identify plumbing fixtures containing lead.** There are lead check swabs that can detect lead on plumbing surfaces such as solder and pipes. These swabs can be purchased at plumbing and home improvement stores.

More information can be found at [dep.pa.gov/lead](http://dep.pa.gov/lead).

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