Lead in drinking water can affect each home in the District differently. Drinking water is essentially lead-free in the distribution system and prior to entering your individual water service pipes.

SOURCES OF LEAD

A lead service pipe

- The pipe that connects the water main in the street to your household plumbing. The material of water service pipes can vary, and some households still have lead service pipes. Lead service pipes were installed until the mid-1950s.

Lead solder

- Connects pipes in household plumbing. Lead solder was used in plumbing prior to 1987.

Brass faucets, valves or fittings

- Almost all faucets, valves and fittings have brass components. Until 2014, brass faucets and fittings sold in the United States that are labeled "lead-free" can contain up to eight percent lead.

Galvanized iron pipes

- Old, corroded pipes that can release lead in water if you have, or once had, a lead service pipe. Galvanized pipes were installed in many homes prior to the 1960s.

Additional Information

Drinking Water Division
202-612-3440
drinkingwater@dcwater.com
dcwater.com/drinkingwater

dc water is life

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
George S. Hawkins, General Manager

TIPS TO REDUCE LEAD in DRINKING WATER

LEAD CAN BE A SIGNIFICANT RISK TO YOUR HEALTH, ESPECIALLY FOR PREGNANT WOMEN AND CHILDREN UNDER AGE SIX.

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

Tips to Reduce Lead in DRINKING WATER

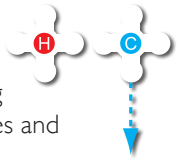
dc water is life

LEAD CAN BE A SIGNIFICANT RISK TO YOUR HEALTH, ESPECIALLY FOR PREGNANT WOMEN AND CHILDREN UNDER AGE SIX.

Run the cold water tap for two minutes before using it for drinking and cooking

- Lead and other metals can dissolve in water when it sits in pipes for a few hours.

Do not use the hot water tap for drinking and cooking



- Always use cold tap water, including water used for making ice, beverages and infant formula.
- Hot tap water can cause a greater amount of lead to release from plumbing and may contain metals and bacteria that build up in the water heater.

Remove and clean faucet aerators

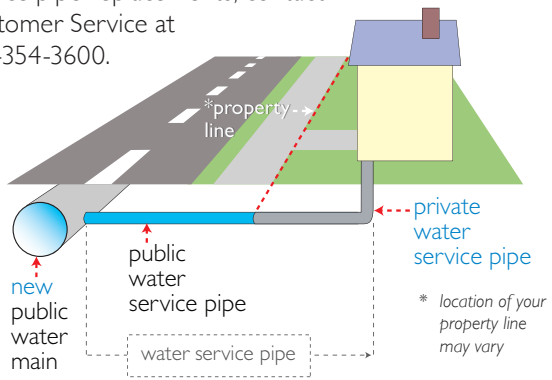
- Lead particles and sediment can collect in the aerator screen located at the tip of your faucet.
- Aerators should be replaced once a year and are available at local hardware stores.

Install lead-free plumbing fixtures

- Install fixtures and fittings that contain 0.25 percent lead or less.

Replace lead service pipes

- Replace a lead service pipe with copper pipe.
- If you replace your lead service pipe on private property, DC Water will replace the portion of the pipe in public space. To learn more about lead service pipe replacements, contact Customer Service at 202-354-3600.



Replace household galvanized plumbing

- When lead is released from a lead service pipe and passes through galvanized pipes, lead can build up on the inside, corroded walls of this plumbing and release lead in household water.
- Contact a licensed plumber about replacing household plumbing.

Flush cold water taps after installing new household pipes or fixtures

- New plumbing can release metals after installation.
- Flush cold water taps for five minutes at a high flow rate once a day for three days, especially before using water for drinking and cooking.

Use filtered tap water

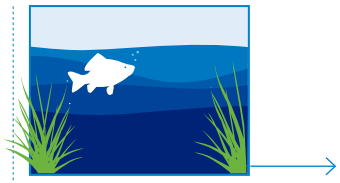
- If you are pregnant or have children under age six, use cold, filtered tap water for drinking and cooking until all lead sources are removed. This includes water used for making infant formula, beverages and ice.
- Select a filter certified to meet NSF Standard 53 for lead. The filter package should specifically list the device as certified for removing the contaminant "lead."
- Routinely replace filter cartridges according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Drain your water heater annually

- Over time, metals, sediment and bacteria can build up in your water heater.
- For instructions on how to drain your water heater, visit dcwater.com/waterheater.

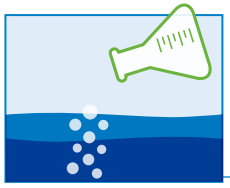
OUR DRINKING WATER

1. Where does drinking water come from?



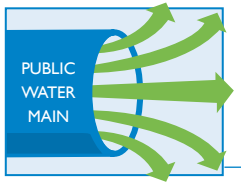
The District of Columbia's drinking water is drawn from the Potomac River by the Washington Aqueduct, a federal agency.

2. Who treats drinking water?



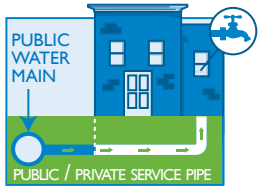
The Washington Aqueduct is responsible for water treatment and adds orthophosphate (a food-grade chemical) to minimize the release of lead from service pipes and household plumbing.

3. Who distributes drinking water?



DC Water distributes the water to homes and businesses through 1,300 miles of pipes in the District.

4. Where can lead be found?



Lead can enter your water if you have a lead service pipe or household plumbing with lead. Orthophosphate can reduce lead release from these sources.

1-3 ESSENTIALLY NO LEAD FOUND

POSSIBLE LEAD