



# RESERVE TOWNSHIP

Reserve Township  
33 Lonsdale Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

reservetwp.com  
Office: 412-322-1551  
Fax: 412-322-2343

## Important Information About Lead In Your Drinking Water

Under the Federal Regulations through the Safe Drinking Water Program, Reserve Township is required to conduct testing for lead/copper contaminant. Reserve Township sampled water from 35 sites/homes, and three sites were found to have elevated levels of lead in drinking water. These are preliminary results and are not yet official. However, the Board of Commissioners has decided that this public health risk needs to be addressed as soon as possible for the protection of the citizens of Reserve Township.

Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information carefully to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

## What are the health effects of lead?

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

*“Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water and 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.”*

# What are the sources of lead?

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Although most lead exposure occurs when people eat paint chips and inhale lead-contaminated dust, or ingest lead-contaminated residential soil, drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. 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 from certain hobbies (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes).

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.

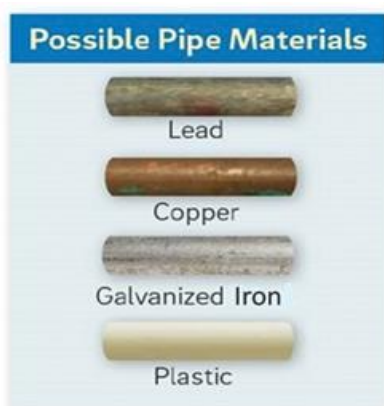
Don't forget about other sources of lead such as lead paint, lead dust, and lead in soil. Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead.

# How does lead get into drinking water?

Lead enters drinking water mainly through corrosion in:

- **Lead full or partial service lines** (that connect some properties to the water mains)
- **Interior lead pipe**
- **Interior galvanized pipe** (especially if there was, or is, a full or partial lead service line)
- **Interior copper pipe with lead soldered joints** (installed prior to 1988)
- **Interior plumbing fixtures** (purchased or installed prior to January 2014 before the effective date of new definition of "lead-free")

**Not all Reserve Township customers have lead service lines, and not all customers with lead service lines have tested above the "action" level.** Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder, but newer homes may also be at risk. The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act establishes the definition of "lead-free" as no more than 0.25 percent lead (as a weighted average) for pipes, fittings & fixtures and 0.2 percent lead for solder and flux. Many manufactures use third-party certification programs to certify that their plumbing products meet the definition of "lead-free." Products manufactured prior to January 2014 may contain higher amounts of lead.



# What can I do?

**If you have specific health concerns, consult your health care provider.**

EPA suggests that you may want to ask your health care provider about testing children to determine levels of lead in their blood.

**Here are some steps you can take to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water:**

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** If you haven't used your water for several hours, run your cold tap for one minute before cooking or drinking. Homes with longer lead water service lines may require flushing for a longer period of time.
- **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula. Lead dissolves more easily in hot water.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
- **Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.** The NSF Consumer Affairs Office has developed a NSF Water Fact Kit for consumers that include specific information about lead in drinking water at: [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org). 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](http://www.nsf.org).
- **Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain 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. Consider having lead-containing pipes and fixtures replaced, or use the precautions listed above.

**Please Contact Reserve Township if you decide to replace your lead service line.**

## How Can Reserve Township Help?

- 1.) **If you are unsure if you have a lead service line, please contact Reserve Township at 412-322-1551 and make an appointment with our Water Department to come into your home to see if they can identify if you have a lead service line. Homes with small children and pregnant woman will be priority for appointments.**
- 2.) **If a lead service line is identified, you may request Reserve Township to provide you with a free lead test kit. After the request is placed, kits are mailed to customers in approximately 10 days. Please follow the directions carefully that are included with your kit. Samples are then sent to an independent laboratory and results are provided to the customer via letter.**
- 3.) **If your results are greater than the lead action level of 15ppb, your lead level may be due to conditions unique to your home, such as full/partial lead service lines, or the presence of lead solder or brass faucets, fittings and valves that may contain lead. Reserve Township will provide you with a water filter, but we strongly urge you to take steps to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water.**

# Where can I get more information?

For more information, visit the Reserve Township website at [www.reservetwp.com](http://www.reservetwp.com) or call 412.322.1551; there are also a number of other on-line sites that provide valuable information about lead and drinking water.

*If you do not have access to a computer, visit your local library branch and they will help you connect for free. Reserve Township can also provide paper copies of information.*

**THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME SUGGESTED SITES:**

Allegheny County Health Department's website at: [www.achd.net/lead](http://www.achd.net/lead)

EPA's website at: [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)

DEP's website at: [www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/PublicDrinkingWater/Pages/Lead-in-Drinking-Water.aspx](http://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/PublicDrinkingWater/Pages/Lead-in-Drinking-Water.aspx)

Centers for Disease Control's website at: [www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.html](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.html)

Call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or Contact your health care provider.