



# What to Know About Your Drinking Water

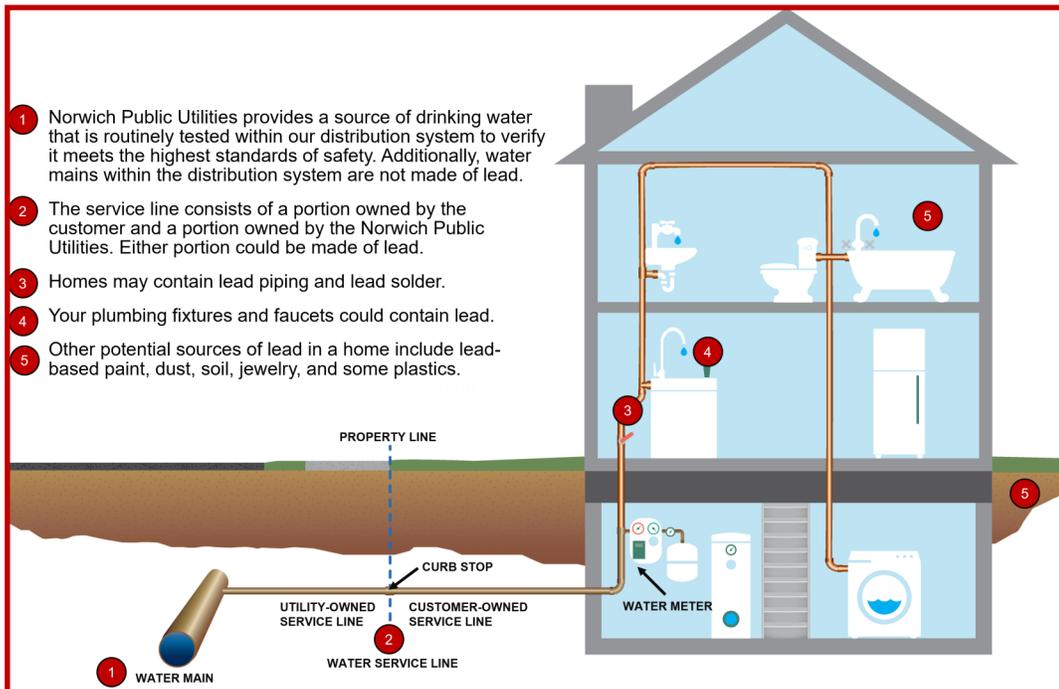
Norwich Public Utilities treats, tests, and distributes high quality drinking water to you and the community. The water we provide every day is lead-free when it leaves the treatment plant and meets all EPA Drinking Water Standards. Corrosion control treatment is added to the water prior to leaving the plant to prevent corrosion of the mains and services within our distribution system. NPU takes the issue of lead in drinking water very seriously, and has prepared this fact sheet to help you identify potential sources of lead in your home, learn how lead can affect your health and, most importantly, how to maintain high quality water and reduce exposure to lead.

## Potential Sources of Lead

Lead is a naturally occurring material used in many residential and industrial products; we may be exposed to it at work or at home. Historically, lead was considered a good material for plumbing because it easily forms into different shapes and resists leaks. For this reason, many homes may have lead-containing service lines to the house, pipes in the house, solder, and kitchen and bath fixtures. Lead may also be found in paint and other products, especially in older homes. See the illustration below for more information.

## Exposure to Lead Can Affect Your Health

Long-term exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Lead exposure can lead to learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.



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## Simple Tips

### to reduce lead exposure in your home

- 1 Test your water** if you are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Tests should be performed by a state-certified laboratory. The cost for the test is about \$30.
- 2 Inspect your in-home water treatment devices** and water softeners; they may increase lead levels in your water. Consult the manufacturer about how the device may affect your drinking water or plumbing. Avoid drinking softened water, as metals from your pipes are more likely to dissolve into soft water than in hard water.
- 3 Filter your water.** Use a water filter that is NSF 53 certified for lead removal. Many filters and filter systems can improve water quality and taste in other ways too. Visit [nsf.org](https://www.nsf.org) for more information.
- 4 Use cold tap water** for drinking and preparing food. Lead dissolves more easily in hot water.
- 5 Flush your tap for at least 5 minutes before drinking or cooking if the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than 6 hours.** However, the amount of time to run the water will depend on whether your home has a lead service line or not, and the length of the lead service line. If you have a known lead service line and your house is set far back from the curb, you may need to flush for longer than 5 minutes. To conserve water, save the water from flushing the tap for watering plants or doing dishes. After flushing, use the water for cooking or drinking, or save it for later use by filling pitchers.
- 6 Install lead-free faucets and fixtures** that are certified to contain no lead. Look for lead certification marks indicating the new product is lead free, and then replace old faucets and fixtures. Visit [nepis.epa.gov](https://nepis.epa.gov) and search for lead free certification for more information.
- 7 Clean faucet aerators and flush** cold water taps regularly. Aerators can collect particles from lead plumbing and should be removed and cleaned on a regular basis. It is especially important after household plumbing work and repairs. After removing the aerator, flush the cold water lines for 5 minutes.

## For more information...

Norwich Public Utilities is committed to providing a safe source of drinking water to its residents, and our staff work hard to keep that commitment. Because property owners in Norwich own a portion of their water service lines, there is a shared responsibility to manage lead exposure. We are ready to work with you to answer your questions about water quality and help reduce lead exposure.

Please use these resources for more information:

- **Norwich Public Utilities website** with more information and helpful tips: [www.NorwichPublicUtilities.com](https://www.NorwichPublicUtilities.com)
- **Connecticut Department of Public Health** information on lead. <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Drinking-Water/DWS/Lead-and-Copper-Rule>
- Resources to understand and reduce lead exposure from the **United States Environmental Protection Agency**: [epa.gov/lead](https://www.epa.gov/lead)
- **Lead Hotline** – Contact the National Lead Information Center's Hotline at 1 (800) 424-LEAD [5323]



**WE'RE HERE TO SERVE YOU:**

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