GASTONIA NC
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Lead Awareness FAQs

STAY UP TO DATE WITH THESE LEAD AND COPPER FAQS AND ANSWERS

1. What is the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR)?

a. A rule written by the EPA regulating the control of lead and copper in drinking water. The rule was initially established in 1991, requiring water systems to monitor drinking water from the customer's taps. The EPA originally set the action levels for lead at 15 ppb and copper at 1.3 ppm. Drinking water systems that tested at or above these levels in more than 10% of customer's taps sampled, the system must take additional actions to control corrosion.

b. The rule was revised (LCRR) in 2021 to include better language about improving protection for children's health through daycare and school monitoring, identifying lead service lines, and requiring more effective communication to the community served.

c. In 2024, the LCRR was improved upon again. Now referred to as the LCRI, the rule was enhanced further to include more community protection from the risk associated with lead exposure in drinking water.

d. You can visit the EPA website to read about the history of the LCR, LCRR, and LCRI. https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule

2. How does lead get into drinking water?

a. The drinking water that TRU supplies does not contain lead. Lead gets into drinking water through the corrosion of lead pipes and lead pipe fittings over time. EPA Lead In Drinking Water Infographic

3. Does my drinking water contain lead and is it safe to drink?

a. TRU does everything it can to prevent and control pipe corrosion as water travels from the treatment plant through the distribution system and into your home. We have had an enhanced corrosion control program in place since 1992.

4. What is a water service line?

a. A water service line is the piping that runs from the main water line to the water meter, this section belongs to TRU. The water service is also the piping that runs from

the water meter to the residence usually to the crawl space or basement of a building. This section belongs to the homeowner.

5. How do I determine what material my water service line is made of?

a. Working with the utility, you may be able to help TRU identify your service line material. TRU has done an initial assessment of service line material for over 30,000 locations throughout our service area. If your home or residence was built in 1988 or after, your water service lines are considered to be lead-free. If your home was built in 1986 or before, TRU will have to identify the service line material. You may be able to help by locating the piping that goes into your home and inspecting it visually. Go to this site to get help identifying what material your plumbing is made of: https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/protect-your-tap-quick-check-lead-0

6. Who is responsible for the replacement of lead service lines?

a. Should the water service line from the meter to the residence has been identified as containing lead, it is up to the property owner to have the line replaced. TRU will work with owners whose service lines have been identified as containing lead.

7. How can I reduce the potential exposure to lead?

a. There are a few ways to reduce your exposure to lead:

- You can run your water to flush out lead before using.
- Make sure you are cleaning your faucet aerators regularly.
- Begin with cold water from the tap to cook and prepare food with, particularly baby formula.
- Consider using a filter certified for lead removal.
- Use an alternative source of water (i.e. bottled water) if lead has been identified in your home

8. Can I get my water tested for lead?

a. You may contact any independent lab, certified for lead testing at 10 ppb or below to schedule a lead test. The EPA advises to use the 1st and 5th sample draw rule, where the sampler samples FIVE 1-Liter bottle, sending in the 1st and 5th liter for analysis. The EPA also requires that water sit, undisturbed for at least 6 hours before sampling to get the best results for lead analysis. TRU is in the process of working with a 3rd party lab to develop a testing program for lead analysis.

9. Do I need a home filter for lead?

a. Not necessarily, although using a certified lead removal filter is a good option to ensure the removal of any potential trace levels of lead. Through its enhanced corrosion

control program, TRU attempts to control pipe corrosion and minimize the amount of corrosive material getting into the water when it comes out of your tap.

10. What are the health effect of lead exposure?

a. Exposure to lead, particularly long-term exposure, have been identified to have negative effects on the health of individuals regardless of age. However, children under the age of 6 and pregnant women are at an increased risk of these effects. Some of the health risks for lead exposure are lower IQ, learning disabilities, nervous system damage, decreased bone and muscle growth, and abnormal kidney function and damage.

Have more questions. Please email us at utilities@gastonianc.gov

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