

New Lead Regulations & Drinking Water

For nearly 175 years, the Regional Water Authority (RWA) has consistently met all of the evolving state and federal drinking water regulations on water quality including those related to lead and copper.

Today, along with all water systems in Connecticut and water utilities across the nation, we are working to comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) revised Lead & Copper Rule (LCR). The LCR is a series of regulations aimed at protecting public health by reducing the potential for exposure to lead through drinking water. It is important to note that the water that leaves the RWA's water treatment plants and travels through water mains to homes or businesses has no lead in it. Federal regulations require that the RWA analyze water samples from a cross-section of homes in our service area. Our test results show that we are consistently below EPA's regulations and in compliance with the LCR.

Lead found in drinking water is most often the result of it slowly dissolving into the water from materials used in home plumbing systems used to supply water. To protect you from this kind of lead exposure, we add a corrosion inhibitor to our water that creates a protective coating on our pipes and the homeowner's plumbing. This coating helps prevent lead from potentially leaching into the drinking water.

Getting the Lead Out: A Shared Responsibility

While we removed all known lead service lines from our side of the system for the safety of our customers in the 1970s and early 1980s, there remains a possibility that lead service lines and connections could exist in some portions of our more than 1,700-mile system of water pipes. There is also the likelihood that service lines, connections and fixtures within homes or businesses could contain lead.

The revised LCR includes a requirement that public water systems develop an inventory of service lines and the materials they are made of, including the water lines and connections on private properties. A service line is the underground pipe carrying water from our main to a home or business. The RWA owns and maintains all water mains and related infrastructure up to the homeowners' property line. The homeowner owns and is responsible for the portion of pipe from the curb valve, located at or near their property line, into their home or business.

The publicly available inventory must be complete by October 2024 and will provide us with important information to comply with EPA's updated guidance and regulations around lead and copper. We have already started our inventory work by reviewing our records and, in the coming months, will be reaching out to our customers to help us determine their service line material. During this time, we will maintain regular communication with our customers about our service line inventory process and any new information coming from the EPA.

As we celebrate National Drinking Water Week – a decades-long tradition led by the American Water Works Association to recognize the vital role water plays in our daily lives – it is a good time to pause and recognize how our local water systems protect public health. Moreover, how the updated federal drinking water regulations are a once-in-a-generation opportunity to get the lead out.

Sincerely,



Larry L. Bingaman
President and CEO



 Regional Water Authority
Tapping the Possibilities™

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Our mailing address is:
Regional Water Authority
90 Sargent Drive
New Haven, CT 06511

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