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OFFICE OF: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

### Replacement Requirements Necessary for Belleville Water Department Lead Service Line Replacement Public Notice

The Belleville Water Department has not yet replaced the minimum required, seven percent, of lead service lines within one year of a lead action level exceedance, thereby violating a drinking water requirement.

Even though this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct the situation.

#### What does this mean?

We routinely monitor for lead and copper at consumers' taps within our distribution system. The samples collected during January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019 and July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019, showed lead levels greater than the lead action level of 15 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$  or parts per billion) in more than 10 percent of the sites sampled. We previously informed you of this exceedance in a notice issued on dated December 15, 2019. You can also view lead and copper results on the State's Drinking Water Watch website available at [https://www9.state.nj.us/DEP/WaterWatch\\_public/index.jsp](https://www9.state.nj.us/DEP/WaterWatch_public/index.jsp) and entering our water system name (Belleville Water Department) Public Water System ID# (NJ0701001).

As a result of the lead action level exceedance, we were required to replace a minimum of seven percent of the lead service lines in the distribution system from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021. We will soon begin the Lead Service Line Replacement Program; however, we did not complete the replacement of the required seven percent, or approximately 385 lead service lines, by the deadline of June 30, 2020 required under the Lead and Copper Rule.

*\*Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure. \**

#### What should I do?

Even though this violation is a treatment technique violation, **we encourage you to take steps to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water through the following steps:**

##### 1. Determine if you have lead service line or interior lead plumbing or solder.

Property owners are encouraged to check their portion of the service lines for lead and we are asking you to contact us at 973-450-3414 if a lead service line is identified so we can update our records. If your home/building was constructed prior to 1987, it is also important to determine if interior lead solder or lead pipes are present. You can check yourself, hire a licensed plumber, or check with your landlord. The installation of lead service lines stopped in Belleville approximately in 1950.

**2. Replace plumbing fixtures and service lines containing lead.** If there is a lead service line, replace it in full, from main to home. Contact 973-450-3414 to learn more about replacing the lead service line on your property.

Replace brass faucets, fittings, and valves that do not meet the current definition of "lead free." The current definition went into effect January 4, 2014; therefore, any "lead free" plumbing materials purchased and/or installed prior to that date should be discarded or replaced. Visit the NSF website at [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

**3. Run the cold water to flush out lead.** Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer the water resides in plumbing the more lead it contains. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet for about 15 to 30 seconds. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of the plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your health.

It usually uses less than one gallon of water. **For those with lead service lines or until you determine if you are served by one, let the water run from the tap longer based on the length of the lead service line and the plumbing configuration in your home. In other words, the larger the home or building and the greater the distance to the water main (in the street), the more water it will take to flush properly (e.g. 5 or more minutes).**

**4. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Because lead from lead-containing plumbing materials and pipes can dissolve into hot water more easily than cold water, never drink, cook, or prepare beverages including baby formula using hot water from the tap. If you have not had your water sampled or if you know or suspect you have a lead service line it is recommended that bottled or filtered water be used for drinking and preparing baby formula. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and then heat it.

**5. Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.

**6. Use alternative sources or treatment of water.** If there is confirmed or suspected lead-containing materials, such as lead service lines and/or interior lead plumbing or lead solder, in your home or building, you may consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 1-800-NSF-8010 or [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Water softeners and reverse osmosis units will remove lead from water but can also make the water more corrosive to lead solder and plumbing by removing certain minerals; therefore, the installation of these treatment units at the point of entry into homes with lead plumbing should only be done under supervision of a qualified water treatment professional.

**7. Remove and clean aerators/screens on plumbing fixtures.** Over time, particles and sediment can collect in the aerator screen. Regularly remove and clean aerators screens located at the tip of faucets and remove any particles.

**8. Test your water for lead.** Call us at **973-450-3414** to find out how to get your water tested for lead. Testing is essential because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water. The Belleville Water Department tests for lead in the drinking water twice a year. If you have a lead service line and would like to be included on our list of sample sites, call the above number. Or directly refer to NJDEP's list of certified labs at <https://www13.state.nj.us/DataMiner>

**9. Get your child tested.** Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead if you are concerned about lead exposure. Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead. Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead. New Jersey law requires that children be screened at both 1 and 2 years of age. Children 3 to 5 years of age should also be screened if they have not been screened before.

#### What is being done?

**This is not an emergency, if it had been you would have been contacted immediately.**

The Belleville Water Department has applied for funding through the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (NJIB) to replace approximately 400 lead service lines as Phase 1 of its Lead Service Line Replacement Program. Also, the Belleville Water Department purchases treated water from the City of Newark which has been adding orthophosphate as a corrosion control treatment to prevent lead from leaching from lead service lines into the drinking water

The Lead Service Line Replacement Program will commence as soon as funding from the NJIB is secured. If your home or building contains a lead service line and/or to find out more about this program, contact the Belleville Water Department at 973-450-3414.

For more information, please contact the Belleville Water Department at 973-450-3414 or at 152 Washington Avenue, Belleville, NJ 07109.

*\*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.\**

This notice is being sent to you by the Belleville Water Department  
State Water System ID# (PWSID) NJ0701001  
Date distributed: September 13, 2021