

Governor Phil Murphy

# Acting Governor Way Signs Legislation Enhancing Lead Disclosure and Testing Requirements

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*Strengthens Existing Protections for Tenants Against Public Health Hazard*

*Requires Landlords to Disclose Lead Drinking Water Hazards to Current and Prospective Tenants*

*Empowers Tenants by Bolstering Lead Testing Requirements*

**TRENTON** – Acting Governor Tahesha Way today signed into law

[A2929 \(https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/A2929/\)](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/A2929/)

[S1034 \(https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/S1034/\)](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/S1034/), which requires landlords to report information about the known or potential presence of lead in drinking water to tenants of residential units, requires public water systems to conduct a lead water test at the request of an occupant at no charge, and deters landlords from obstructing the replacement of lead pipes.

A2929/S1034 builds upon existing legislation to address the ongoing public health and environmental hazard posed by lead service lines. In July 2021, Governor Phil Murphy signed the [Lead Service Line Replacement Law \(https://pub.njleg.gov/bills/2020/PL21/183\\_.PDF\)](https://pub.njleg.gov/bills/2020/PL21/183_.PDF), requiring public community water systems to replace all lead service lines in their distribution systems by 2031.

“With this bill, we’re protecting New Jerseyans in their communities,” **said Acting Governor Way**. “No child or adult should ever be forced to live with the detrimental and lasting health effects caused by lead poisoning from their homes. Today’s action strengthens tenant protections, removes barriers to lead pipe replacement, and ensures safer homes and healthier communities for generations to come.”

“All New Jersey residents have a right to essential drinking water quality information that could impact their health. With the signing of this bill, current and prospective renters gain added protections which require landlords to disclose information regarding potential exposure to lead in drinking water,” **said Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette**. “DEP remains committed to helping communities identify and remove lead service lines and inform the public about ways to reduce their exposure.”

“It should be a basic right for everyone to live in a home free from lead that can poison people, especially young children. This is why DCA works incredibly hard to abate lead paint hazards from homes and to collaborate with other state agencies on efforts to inform people about potential lead exposure risks in their homes,” **said Department of**

**Community Affairs Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suárez.** “We believe that through effective programs, transparency, and improved public health information about lead, we can help significantly reduce lead poisoning and improve people’s health.”

“There is no safe level of lead, and we know that lead exposure disproportionately affects communities living in older housing. That makes this law’s tenant protections essential for advancing health equity in our state,” **said Acting Health Commissioner Jeff Brown.** “By ensuring renters have access to critical information about lead risks in their homes and creating meaningful recourse when landlords fall short, this law empowers New Jerseyans to protect their family’s health.”

Exposure to lead is a significant public health concern, particularly for babies and children. Long term lead exposure can cause adverse physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms. Public health and medical professionals agree that there is no safe level of lead exposure. The primary source of lead in drinking water is lead service pipes that connect water main lines to individual buildings.

Over the past four years, New Jersey has replaced 22,007 lead service lines. The state has a total of 135,547 lead service lines and 872,942 service lines of unknown materials. While the federal government banned the use of lead in service lines and other plumbing in 1986, removing the material is an ongoing challenge. In many circumstances, the ownership of service lines is split between property owners and water systems, creating difficulties with cost sharing and coordination that can slow progress.

A2929/S1034 requires the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Community Affairs (DCA), and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop and publicly post a notice to inform consumers about health risks associated with lead in drinking water and ways to minimize exposure.

The law also requires residential landlords to inform current and prospective tenants if the property is served by a service line that does or may contain lead, along with information such as violations of today’s legislation that cause the landlord to be penalized. Additionally, the law allows a tenant to terminate their lease at no charge or penalty if the landlord denies access to a lead service line for replacement at the property.

“Access to clean water is fundamental, and parents deserve the peace of mind that comes with knowing that the water their children drink at home is safe,” **said Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin.** “The bill signed into law today continues our commitment to public safety, building on earlier lead remediation efforts that required public water systems to begin replacing lead service lines across New Jersey. It will give countless families across New Jersey the protections and information they deserve, strengthen accountability for landlords and water systems, and help ensure future generations can grow up with the confidence that their communities will always have safe, clean drinking water.”

“There is no safe level of lead exposure, especially for infants and children,” **said Senate President Nick Scutari.** “Long-term exposure can cause physical harm, psychological damage, and behavioral problems that can plague them during their developmental years. I commend Senator Greenstein, Senate Majority Leader Ruiz and the other sponsors for acting to protect the health and safety of tenants by testing their water and informing them of contaminants. Every child deserves clean water and every parent deserves to know their child is not in danger.”

The primary sponsors of A2929/S1034 are Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz, Senator Linda Greenstein, Assembly Majority Leader Louis Greenwald, Assemblyman Anthony Verrelli, and Assemblyman Gary Schaar.

“Access to clean, safe drinking water is fundamental to fostering healthy communities, and our legislative efforts have focused on ensuring every New Jersey resident can trust the water in their homes,” **said Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz**. “This is especially important for renters, who may live in older buildings and have limited control over maintenance. They deserve to know their risk, understand how to reduce it, and have confidence that landlords won’t block necessary replacements. This legislation builds on our efforts by putting community health first, equipping tenants with the information and resources they need, and ensuring lead service line replacements can proceed without obstruction.”

“The presence of lead in drinking water represents a significant threat to the health and safety of New Jersey’s children and residents. Data suggests that exposure to relatively small amounts of lead can result in serious health complications, including difficulties with memory and concentration, and miscarriages or premature birth in pregnant women,” **said Senator Linda Greenstein**. “We must be vigilant in our fight against lead exposure by ensuring that customers and consumers are provided with as much information as possible surrounding their risk and are allowed the ability to have lead service lines replaced.”

“The dangers of lead in drinking water, particularly for children, are all too well documented,” **said Assembly Majority Leader Louis Greenwald**. “With this legislation, we are working to reduce the risk of exposure, protect New Jersey families, and arm them with knowledge of what’s happening in and around their residences. I thank Acting Governor Way for signing this important piece of legislation.”

“Every New Jersey resident deserves access to clean and safe drinking water,” **said Assemblyman Anthony Verrelli**. “Whether it’s a young adult renting their first apartment or a growing family finding a larger space, they deserve to move into their new home without worrying about the safety of their water. This legislation empowers tenants with the right to request vital health information about lead in their water from their landlords while ensuring they won’t face penalties when their well-being isn’t prioritized.”

“The bill signed into law today adds several levels of accountability for landlords and their obligation to ensure the safety of their tenants,” **said Assemblyman Gary Schaer**. “Lead contamination is prevalent in all regions across the state, and it is crucial that we protect the health of our New Jersey families. Some of the oldest residential structures in New Jersey are in our urban communities, like Passaic, which are disproportionately impacted by lead contamination in water service lines. This bill will empower renters and provide them with the tools to combat lead exposure.”

“We thank Assemblyman Schaer for his steadfast leadership on this very important issue, and we thank both him and Senator Greenstein for sponsoring this bill,” **said David Brogan, Executive Director & CEO of the New Jersey Apartment Association**. “A2929/S1034 strengthens consumer protections by improving tenant notifications, preventing obstruction of lead service line replacements, and allowing residents to obtain free water tests. With Acting Governor Way’s signature, New Jersey is continuing to take vital steps toward replacing all lead service lines by 2031.”

“This new law is a critical step in protecting New Jerseyans from lead exposure, especially renters who have historically lacked information about housing hazards,” **said Deandrah Cameron, Policy Manager, New Jersey Future**. “By closing this disclosure gap, the state is advancing both public health and equity. New Jersey Future applauds the Legislature and the Murphy Administration’s leadership and stands ready to support effective implementation.”

“For too long, New Jersey tenants have been in the dark about whether their drinking water that comes out of their faucet is delivered by a lead service line. And often you can’t fix a problem that you don’t know about. This bill shines

a spotlight on the prevalence of lead service lines and provides tenants the right to immediately get their water tested if it's serviced by a lead service line," **said Doug O'Malley, Director of Environment New Jersey**. "The first step to get the lead out of our drinking water is to let the public – especially tenants – know the risks they face and get water testing data to keep lead out of our bodies and brains. The long-term solution is the replacement of all lead service lines which has been championed by Governor Murphy, but for the moment, more transparency is a win for tenants, and we thank the leadership of Senator Greenstein and Assemblyman Gary Schaer for getting this bill done."

"Safe, affordable, and healthy homes are the foundation of strong communities," **said Kelvin Boddy, Director of Healthy Homes and Communities, Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey**. "By requiring landlords to disclose the risks of lead in drinking water, this law empowers tenants with vital information to protect their families. There should be no doubts over the safety of the water in our homes. This is an important step toward accountability and ensuring every New Jersey resident can live in a healthy home and community."

"No parent should ever have to worry that the water they use to cook, bathe, or mix formula for their baby could contain lead. More than a third of New Jerseyans rent their homes, and it is critical they have the information they need to protect their families' health," **said Allison McLeod, Executive Director, New Jersey LCV**. "This law is a victory for public health and environmental justice by empowering renters, protecting children, and moving us closer to a future where every New Jerseyan can count on safe, clean, affordable drinking water. The signing of this bill into law also represents another one of New Jersey LCV's top five legislative priorities getting across the finish line!"

"Cheers to the NJ legislature and Governor Murphy for the passage of NJ A2929-S1034 that will require landlords to disclose lead drinking water hazards in residential units," **said Elyse Pivnick, Senior Advisor, Isles**. "In combination with NJ's Lead Safe Certificate bill and our extensive whole house and lead safe home repair programs, our state is the head-of-the-class among states for protecting its residents from all lead hazards."

"We are very pleased to see the enactment of A2929/S1034," **said Chris DeMarco, Regional Field Manager for the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO)** and lifelong resident of New Jersey. "As a publisher of model plumbing codes and standards and a leading certifier of water filtration systems, IAPMO strongly supports policies that protect public health and safety. Reducing the risks associated with lead in drinking water is a fundamental public health priority that this important legislation serves to advance."

For more information about lead service lines in New Jersey, visit <https://dep.nj.gov/lead/> (<https://dep.nj.gov/lead/>).

To learn more about lead impacts on our health, visit [nj.gov/health/childhood-lead/](https://www.nj.gov/health/childhood-lead/) (<https://www.nj.gov/health/childhood-lead/>).

Parents and guardians can view their child's lead test results by downloading the Docket® app (available on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store) or visiting [myHealthNJ.com](https://myhealthnj.com/) (<https://myhealthnj.com/>).

For more information about the environmental lead exposure reduction, visit [dep.nj.gov/lead/](https://dep.nj.gov/lead/) (<https://dep.nj.gov/lead/>).

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