

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

STATE SUPPORTS CITY OF NEWARK'S DECISION TO PROVIDE WATER FILTERS TO RESIDENTS WITH LEAD SERVICE LINES

TRENTON – New Jersey state health and environmental officials are supporting the City of Newark's decision to provide in-home tap water filters to Newark residents whose homes have lead service lines. The City is taking prompt action after receiving notice that recent tests indicate that the Newark water department's corrosion-control treatment is no longer working effectively in some areas.

The service lines are the pipes that connect residents' homes to the City's water lines. The City is taking quick and aggressive action to provide tap water filters to homes with lead service lines in order to protect public health.

I fully support Mayor Baraka's efforts to urgently respond to this situation," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "Our first priority is assuring the health of our residents, and so we urge everyone to follow the guidance from state and local officials. My administration stands ready to provide any assistance necessary."

Newark Drinking Water: Three Steps Residents Should Take

1. **Call 973-733-6303 to find out if you have a lead service line.** Not all residences in Newark are affected. The Newark Water Department is available to provide this information.
2. **If you have a lead service line, begin using filtered or bottled water immediately.** "Flushing" – running the water from the tap for a few minutes – will not work in this case. Newark is distributing water filters to affected residents.
3. **Get children's blood tested for lead levels.** Talk to your health care provider or the Newark Department of Health and Community Wellness at 973-733-5323.

"We urge all city residents in exposed homes to provide either filtered or bottled water to children under age 6 at home, especially when mothers are using powdered baby formula or other powdered drinks to feed their children," **said DOH Commissioner of Health, Dr. Shereef Elnahal**. "Formula-fed infants are especially at risk. Lead can have long-term effects on the developing brains of children."

"We support the City of Newark in its efforts to quickly address this important public health issue," **said DEP Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe**. "This is the time for government agencies to act together to protect the health of Newark residents."

"I am grateful for all of the help that Newark has received from Governor Murphy, the NJDEP and NJ Department of Health to enable us to move quickly to distribute water filters and educate people about the need for filters in homes with lead service lines" **said Newark Mayor Ras Baraka**. "Once again, the Governor has proven his concern for the people of Newark and has moved quickly and effectively on our behalf."

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection advises customers of the water system who have lead service lines that flushing their home water lines by running tap water, as previously advised, should not be done, as it could increase lead levels under the particular circumstances presented in Newark. The City can provide information and assistance to residents who want to find out if they have a lead service line.

Local Health Departments in New Jersey, including the city of Newark, offer free lead screening to all children under the age of 6 who are uninsured.

The City's actions are in response to notification from the EPA regarding certain lead level exceedances. On the afternoon of October 1, 2018, DEP received a notification from EPA regarding certain sampling results in the Newark system. Thereafter, on October 2, DEP spoke with Newark's consultants about preliminary results of the corrosion control study. On October 11, 2018, Newark submitted the draft corrosion control treatment report. The preliminary results and report indicate that corrosion control for the Pequannock portion of Newark's service area is no longer effective. In particular, the silicate is no longer providing a protective barrier on the lead service lines' interior and the coating of the pipes is sloughing off into the drinking water supply.

Although customers are directly notified of any violations by their water system, the DEP's Drinking Water Watch website (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__t.e2ma.net_click_zgtrz_nrddit_f5u10f&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1msHjOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=xF3DPDNEH8rwpTwktOjb4MHQ0EgF6v3M0zt3hszQvyU&m=13rj13PRcraBZ1fdtZaa-0SioM7IsFA1MdlrVPI-2E&s=RK66BGU3o-m-JOJDiwLEqZTqrdPrQuwH_e7bPxhVmmY&e=) also provides current online access to drinking water data, including water testing results and any violations.

More information about lead in drinking water and its health effects is available on by visiting www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__t.e2ma.net_click_zgtrz_nrddit_vxv10f&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1msHjOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=xF3DPDNEH8rwpTwktOjb4MHQ0EgF6v3M0zt3hszQvyU&m=13rj13PRcraBZ1fdtZaa-0SioM7IsFA1MdlrVPI-2E&s=jmxgGdeBpUURo0BbCvzhGcmJZM33aunT7gK8NhwG_2g&e=) and www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/dwc-lead-consumer.html (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__t.e2ma.net_click_zgtrz_nrddit_vxv10f&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1msHjOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=xF3DPDNEH8rwpTwktOjb4MHQ0EgF6v3M0zt3hszQvyU&m=13rj13PRcraBZ1fdtZaa-0SioM7IsFA1MdlrVPI-2E&s=jmxgGdeBpUURo0BbCvzhGcmJZM33aunT7gK8NhwG_2g&e=)

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Additional Background:

The federal Lead and Copper Rule, issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), requires water systems to take certain corrective actions when 10 percent or more of a system's tap water monitoring samples show exceedances of the federal action level of 15 parts per billion of lead.

Newark's water department first detected elevated levels of lead in some homes in Newark in 2017, when regular monitoring required by federal and state law showed that more than 10% of the tap water samples collected by the City exceeded the "action level" established by federal regulation. The City notified residents at that time and provided recommendations for residents to reduce their exposure to lead in the drinking water. Those recommendations included running tap water before using it.

Newark's monitoring results for the first and second halves of 2017 and the first half of 2018 resulted in lead action level exceedances. The City of Newark's most recent action level exceedance was 17 parts per billion for the first half of 2018.

The City has been following the requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule (the Rule) to address this situation since the action level exceedances. Under the Rule, Newark was required to undertake a corrosion control study to determine the cause of the lead exceedances and what treatment changes may be necessary to optimize corrosion control to reduce the leaching of lead into drinking water.

As required under the regulations, Newark's water department is also developing a complete and accurate inventory of the locations of all lead service lines in the City. Because of the age of many of these lines, many cities currently lack complete and accurate information about where lead service lines are located. Newark currently estimates that upwards of 50 percent of the service lines in the City may be made fully or partly of lead.

The City will be able to use the inventory information to focus and prioritize its efforts to assist residents in reducing their exposure to lead contaminants and ultimately replacing the lead service lines. The DEP is working to assist Newark in developing its plan and financing for pipe analysis by EPA.

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