



Water Quality Information and Lead: April 2015

In light of the national attention on Flint, Michigan's water system issues – including elevated lead levels in drinking water – the City of Fairfield wishes to share information on the safety of its drinking water.

Fairfield's Public Utilities Department, Division of Water, produces and distributes close to 2 billion gallons of clean drinking water each year. The safety of this drinking water is the Department's highest priority. Fairfield's drinking water is in compliance with all state and federal health standards for drinking water, including standards for lead.

There is no detectable lead in Fairfield's drinking water produced at the City's water plant or in the City's water distribution system. While uncommon, any lead that might enter the drinking water would be picked up from within a building's internal piping. Generally speaking, Fairfield's water system is not prone to lead problems because of the following factors:

- Due to the relatively young age of Fairfield's system, there are no known lead water service lines; lead service lines were phased out in the 1930's and 1940's. A water service line is the smaller pipe that connects an individual home or building to a City's public water main.
- Fairfield draws its drinking water from the Great Miami Aquifer, a high quality and non-corrosive water supply; and
- Fairfield adjusts the pH of its water at the Water Plant prior to distribution so that the water is stable and not aggressive to pipes, which minimizes the potential for lead to leach into the water through corrosion.

Fairfield has been producing safe drinking water since 1955 and will continue to do all it can to provide safe and healthy water to its customers now and in the future. Fairfield's commitment to safe drinking water includes staying informed on the most current techniques for corrosion control so as to minimize the potential for lead exposure.

Questions about these issues can be referred to Fairfield's Water Division at 513-858-7775.

Listed below are some frequently asked questions (FAQ's) concerning lead in drinking water:

FAQs Regarding Lead in Drinking Water

- 1) Does Fairfield's drinking water contain lead?

There is no detectable lead in Fairfield's drinking water produced at the City's water plant or in the City's water distribution system. However, while uncommon it is possible that lead may enter water in a particular home or business due to that building's pipes and plumbing. In Fairfield potential sources of lead in drinking water might be lead solder, or brass or bronze plumbing fixtures.

- 2) How can I find out if there is lead in the water at my home?

In older U.S. cities, lead water service lines are the most common source and cause of elevated lead in drinking water. Homes built prior to the 1930's or 1940's may contain lead pipes. There are no known lead water service lines in Fairfield.

If you are interested in having your water tested for lead, Fairfield Public Utilities Department can provide a list of certified laboratories that perform lead analyses.

- 3) Are there steps I can take to help reduce potential lead hazards at my tap?

Water sitting idle in home plumbing systems for extended periods may allow dissolved lead to enter your drinking water. If you are concerned about lead, you can take the simple precaution of letting the cold water run for a minute before using it for drinking or cooking purposes. Also, use only cold water for cooking, drinking or making baby formula.

- 4) What does Fairfield do to help keep lead out of my drinking water?

There is no lead in Fairfield's drinking water as it leaves the City's water treatment plant or in its water distribution system. The City's water treatment process is operated to produce water of a consistent quality that minimizes the potential for corrosion of home and business plumbing systems that could allow lead to enter your drinking water. The City's primary method for corrosion control is through pH adjustment. The City monitors water quality at the treatment plant, in the distribution system, and collects periodic lead samples as required to ensure compliance with all federal and state rules.

- 5) Does Fairfield water comply with lead regulations?

Starting in the early 1990's, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began requiring public water systems like Fairfield's to ensure its water treatment systems minimize potential corrosion of lead and copper plumbing components, in an effort to reduce the dangers associated with lead in water. EPA also began requiring water systems to regularly collect water samples in customers' homes to determine compliance with established lead health levels. For over 23 years Fairfield has been in compliance with these EPA rules for lead. Fairfield last conducted lead sampling in the summer of 2015.

- 6) I thought that my plumbing was not allowed to have lead components.

Current federal regulations restrict lead used in plumbing components. However, some older homes in Fairfield may have lead plumbing solder, and/or brass or bronze fixtures that may contain lead.

- 7) Where can I get additional information on lead in drinking water?

Additional information regarding lead and copper in drinking water and steps you can take to further safeguard your family are available from the EPA at: www.epa.gov. The City of Fairfield annually prepares a Water Quality Report for its local consumers. Copies of the Water Quality Report are available free of charge at the Fairfield Water Plant at 5021 Groh Lane, or by visiting the City website at: http://www.fairfield-city.org/water/CCR_2014.pdf