



Township of Hillsborough

COUNTY OF SOMERSET
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Lead in Drinking Water

General Information Regarding Lead

Lead in drinking water has no taste, odor or color. It is estimated that 20% or more of human exposure to lead may come from lead in drinking water. There is no safe level of lead in the human body. Sources of lead exposure include ingestion of lead-based paint chips and dust, inhalation of lead dust, and ingestion of lead in drinking water. Lead can get into drinking water through old lead pipes may, plumbing solder that was made from lead, or some plumbing fixtures.

Health Effects of Lead

Lead can cause a variety of harmful health effects. The type and severity of these health effects depend on how much lead has built up in the body over time. When water containing lead is ingested, some of the lead is absorbed through the digestive tract and distributed to all parts of the body through the blood. Children and fetuses are most sensitive to the harmful effects of lead. Children younger than six years old are at greatest risk from exposure to lead. Infants who drink formula mixed with water containing lead are ingesting much more lead than older children, young children absorb more lead through their stomachs than older children and adults, and young children have developing brains and nervous systems that make them most vulnerable to health effects of lead. Even low levels of lead in the blood may affect the ability to pay attention and cause poor academic achievement and behavioral problems.

Ways to Reduce Potential Drinking Water Lead Exposure at Home

- If water in a particular faucet is not used for six hours or longer, “flush” the pipes by running cold water for one minute. The more time water sits in your home’s pipes the more lead and other dissolved metals the water may contain.
- Use only cold water for drinking, cooking and making baby formula. Hot water may contain higher levels of lead.
- Clean screens and aerators in faucets frequently to remove captured lead particles.
- If building or remodeling use only “lead-free” piping and material for plumbing.
- Have your water tested. *Lead is odorless, tasteless and colorless so the only way to determine if lead is in your drinking water is to have your water tested.*

How to Test Your Water For Lead

There are several testing laboratories that operate in Hillsborough that can sample your water. Additionally, the Hillsborough Health Department hosts a water testing event every year where residents can purchase water testing kits at a reduced cost. Please contact the Health Department at (908) 369 - 5652 for a list of laboratories or for the date of our next water testing event.

What Should I Do if My Water Has an Elevated Concentration of Lead?

The first thing that must be done is to determine where the source of lead is in your plumbing system. This is accomplished by following a specific water testing procedure, in addition to having a plumber inspect the plumbing system in your home. Once located, the source of the lead needs to be removed. As an example, if it is determined that your house has lead solder in the plumbing, it must be removed, and replaced with lead-free solder. While filters are available that can remove lead from water, it is a far better idea to locate and remove the source of the lead completely.

List of Certified Laboratories

Below is a list of some of the water testing laboratories which practice in the area. This listing is for informational use only, and does not represent a specific Health Department endorsement. In addition, there should not be any implications derived from the order in which firms are listed. Lastly, more certified labs can be found online.

RAdata, Inc.	(973) 927-7303	www.radata.com
South Jersey Water Testing	(866) 875 - 3506	www.Sjwatertest.com
Eurofins QC Laboratories	(215) 355-3900	www.eurofinsus.com/qc
CRC Services, LLC	(732) 548-7363	
NJ Analytical Laboratories	(609) 737-3477	www.njal.com
All - State Well Testing Services	(908) 835-2510	www.all-statewelltesting.com
Garden State Laboratories	(800) 273-8901	www.gslabs.com