

GET THE LEAD OUT

Lead in Drinking Water & Home Toolkit

A Community Guide to Lead in Drinking Water and the Home

Prepared in Collaboration with:



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Supporting communities with science-based tools to
understand lead risks, test drinking water, and reduce exposure

Introduction to Lead in Drinking Water Toolkit

What Is Lead?

Lead is a metal that can cause health problems if it gets into drinking water. In the past, lead was used in pipes, plumbing, paint, and gasoline. Most uses of lead in homes are now banned. However, lead can still be found in older homes, buildings, and water systems made with lead materials.

Lead can get into drinking water from old pipes, service lines, or plumbing fixtures. This is more likely when water has been sitting in the pipes for several hours. You can't see, taste, or smell lead, so testing your water is the only way to know if it's there.

About This Toolkit

Volunteer scientists worked with Thriving Earth Exchange to create this toolkit. It helps residents learn about lead, test their water, and lower their risk.

Thriving Earth Exchange supports community science by helping communities find resources, project managers, and experts to address their pressing concerns. Together they work to help communities be more empowered, resilient, and responsive. To learn more about the program visit: <https://thrivingearthexchange.org/>

Inside, you'll find:

- Explanations of what lead is, its history in drinking water, and why it matters
- Step-by-step instructions for testing your water
- Guidance for understanding your results
- Low-cost to higher-cost actions to reduce exposure
- Information on health impacts and where to get help

Everyone has a right to safe, clean water. Whether you rent, own your home, or care for children or elders, this toolkit is here to help you protect your household and your community.

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FAQs

Is it okay to have any amount of lead in my blood?

No. There is no safe level of lead in the body, especially for children and pregnant people. Even low levels can affect health over time. If lead is found in your blood, steps should be taken to find and reduce the source of exposure.

Can I taste, smell, or see lead in my drinking water?

No. Lead in water cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. Water can look, smell, and taste normal and still contain lead. The only way to know if lead is present is to test your water.

Can well water have lead in it?

Yes. Lead usually does not come from groundwater itself, but it can enter well water through:

- Old pipes, fittings, or solder
- Brass fixtures or valves
- Plumbing materials inside the home

Private wells are not tested by the government, so homeowners must test their own water.

Is it safe to do dishes with lead-contaminated water?

Lead in water does not easily stick to dishes, so washing dishes is usually low risk.

To reduce risk:

- Rinse dishes well
- Let dishes fully dry
- Do not use lead-contaminated water to prepare food or baby formula

If you are concerned, you can use filtered water for rinsing dishes that will be used for infants or young children. **Important:** Do not use hot tap water for drinking or cooking. Hot water can contain higher levels of lead.

Section B: What Is Lead Poisoning?

Lead poisoning happens when lead builds up in the body over time and starts to damage the body. Unlike some toxins, lead does not easily leave the body. Even low levels can cause harm before any symptoms appear.

Lead poisoning is not just a single illness or symptom. It happens over time and damage can continue even when someone feels fine.

Common Sources of Lead Exposure

- Drinking water from lead pipes, fixtures, or solder
 - Lead-based paint or dust in older buildings
 - Swallowing soil (even accidentally) around homes or roads that contain lead
 - Work or hobbies involving lead
 - Certain imported products (spices, pottery, cosmetics, remedies)
-

Symptoms of Lead Poisoning

Many people with lead poisoning feel fine at first. Symptoms often appear only after lead has built up in the body. The symptoms below can happen after small amounts of lead over time or large amounts of lead over a short time.

High levels of lead exposure over a short time are rare. This usually happens during unusual events, such as an accident at a job site, where a large amount of lead is swallowed or breathed in at once. Many of the symptoms of high lead exposure are the same as those listed below, but they may appear suddenly and be more severe. In very serious cases, this can include seizures or loss of consciousness.

If you or your child are experiencing these symptoms and are concerned about possible lead exposure, contact a healthcare provider. A blood test is the only way to confirm lead poisoning.

Children	Adults
Trouble paying attention or hyperactivity	Headaches or memory problems
Learning or behavior problems	Abdominal pain or digestive issues
Irritability or mood changes	Joint or muscle pain
Fatigue or low energy	Numbness or tingling in hands or feet
Loss of appetite or weight loss	Fatigue, weakness, or mood changes
Stomach pain, constipation, or vomiting	High blood pressure
Slower growth or delayed development	Fertility problems or miscarriage
Hearing problems or speech delays	

How Lead Affects Different People

All groups listed below can experience the general symptoms of lead poisoning described above. This table explains why some people are more likely to be affected or may face extra risks.

Group	Why They're at Higher Risk	Possible Health Effects (in addition to symptoms listed below)
Young children (under age 6)	Their bodies and brains are still growing, and they often put hands or objects in their mouths.	Learning and behavior problems, lower IQ, attention issues, delayed growth, hearing or speech problems
Pregnant people & babies	Lead stored in bones can move into the blood during pregnancy or breastfeeding.	Miscarriage, premature birth, low birth weight, brain and nervous system damage
Adults	Lead can slowly build up in the body over time and affect many parts of the body.	High blood pressure, kidney damage, memory problems, nerve pain, fertility issues
Families in older or low-income housing	Older homes are more likely to have lead paint, dust, or old plumbing, and people may be exposed to lead again and again over time, which can build up in the body.	All common lead poisoning symptoms
Immigrant & refugee communities	Possible past exposure or use of imported products that may contain lead, along with repeated exposure over time that can build up in the body.	All common lead poisoning symptoms
Workers & hobbyists	Lead exposure at work or during hobbies; lead dust can be carried home on clothes leading to repeated exposure over time that can build up in the body.	All common lead poisoning symptoms

When to Talk to a Doctor

Ask a healthcare provider about a blood lead test if you or your child:

- Live in or regularly visit an older building
- Use well water or suspect lead plumbing
- Work in construction, auto repair, plumbing, battery recycling, or similar fields
- Have symptoms that could be caused by lead

Important: Even mild or vague symptoms should be checked early. Testing and reducing exposure as soon as possible can prevent serious health problems later.

Further Information

- [World Health Organization: Lead poisoning](#)
- [Mayo Clinic Lead Poisoning](#)
- [Virginia Department of Health Lead Exposure](#)
- [Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Q&A](#)

Learn more: Explore the other sections of this toolkit for additional information and guidance:
<http://bit.ly/3LNq02G>

Section C: Lead in Drinking Water

Why Lead Is Still a Concern Today

For many years, lead was widely used in pipes, paint, gasoline, and other household products. Over time, scientists learned that lead can cause serious health problems. As scientists learned more, the United States passed laws to reduce lead exposure and protect people's health.

These protections focused on the places and situations where people were most likely to be exposed to lead.

How Regulations Protect People from Lead Exposure

U.S. lead regulations focus on four major areas:

Protecting Workers

Rules limit lead exposure in workplaces where people might breathe in or handle lead. These rules help protect workers and reduce the chance of lead being carried home on clothes or equipment.

Protecting Homes and Families

Laws reduced and eventually banned lead-based paint in housing and public buildings, especially to protect children from paint chips and lead dust.

Protecting Drinking Water Systems

Regulations now limit how much lead can be used in pipes, fixtures, and plumbing materials. They also require water systems to treat water in ways that reduce pipe corrosion and lead entering the water.

Replacing Old Infrastructure

More recent efforts focus on finding and replacing lead service lines and other old plumbing still in use today.

Because of these protections, childhood lead poisoning in the United States has dropped by more than 90%. However, lead exposure has not been eliminated. Older homes, aging pipes, and past pollution mean that lead can still be present, especially in communities with older systems or fewer resources for repairs.

How Lead Gets Into Drinking Water

Lead rarely comes from the water source itself. Instead, lead usually enters drinking water after it leaves the treatment plant, and flows through pipes or plumbing materials that contain lead.

Lead is more likely to leach into water when:

- Water sits in pipes for long periods
 - Water is more acidic or low in minerals
 - Pipes or fixtures are old or corroded
-

Common Sources of Lead in Drinking Water

- **Lead service lines:** Pipes that connect the water main in the street to a home; a major source of lead in older neighborhoods
- **Lead solder:** Used to join copper pipes before 1986; can release lead into water
- **Brass or chrome-plated fixtures:** Even newer fixtures may contain small amounts of lead
- **Galvanized pipes:** Can release lead that has collected inside the pipes over time
- **Goosenecks or pigtails:** Short sections of lead pipe used to connect plumbing components
- **Private wells:** Lead can enter if pumps, casings, plumbing parts, or surrounding soil contain lead

Public water systems must treat water to reduce pipe corrosion, test homes most likely to have lead plumbing, and share results with the community each year. Even with these protections, lead can still enter water in homes with older plumbing or partial pipe replacements.

This is why household testing and maintenance are important steps for reducing lead exposure.

Further Information

- [Lead Laws and Regulations | US EPA](#)
- [Enforcing Lead Laws and Regulations | US EPA](#)
- [Protect Your Tap: A Quick Check for Lead | US EPA](#)
- [Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water | US EPA](#)
- [Sources of Lead in Drinking Water](#)

Learn more: Explore the other sections of this toolkit for additional information and guidance:

<http://bit.ly/3LNq02G>

Section D: Understanding How Lead Is Measured in Drinking Water

How Lead Is Measured

Lead in drinking water is measured in parts per billion (ppb). One part per billion means one drop of lead in one billion drops of water. Even though that sounds very small, lead can still harm health at low levels.

Water tests measure how much lead is present in a specific water sample. Results can change depending on when the sample was taken, how long water sat in the pipes, and what the home's plumbing is made of.

What the Numbers Mean

When you receive a test result, the number tells you how much lead was detected in that sample of water.

- 0 ppb means no lead was detected in the sample
- Any number above 0 ppb means lead is present
- Higher numbers mean more lead is entering the water from pipes or fixtures

Because lead exposure builds up over time, lower numbers are always better, even if they are below legal limits.

Legal Limits for Lead in Drinking Water

In the United States, the action level for lead in drinking water is 15 ppb. This is not a safety limit. It is the level at which public water systems must take action to reduce lead, such as changing water treatment or replacing pipes.

Some newer rules are lowering this action level to 10 ppb to better protect people's health.

These limits are set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). [They guide water systems.](#)

Is Legal the Same as Safe?

No. There is no safe level of lead exposure, especially for children and pregnant people. Health effects can happen below the legal action level, especially when exposed over a long time.

A water test result below 15 ppb does not mean there is no risk. It means the water system is not legally required to take action. Even low levels of lead can add to exposure from other sources, such as food, dust, or soil.

Why Testing Matters

The health impacts of lead exposure can vary based on several factors. These include:

- How much lead a person is exposed to
- How often exposure occurs and over what period of time
- Who is being exposed (such as children, pregnant people, or adults)

Because lead builds up in the body over time, reducing exposure as much as possible is the best way to protect health, even when test results are below legal limits.

Testing your water helps you decide whether steps like filtering, flushing pipes, or replacing plumbing are needed to lower exposure.

Further Information

- [EPA Safe Water Drinking Act](#)
- [EPA's Drinking Water Regulations for Lead](#)
- [EPA Lead in Drinking Water Outreach Resources](#)

Testing Your Drinking Water for Lead

About Lead Tests for Drinking Water

Testing your water is the only way to know if lead is present. Because lead cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted, testing is an important first step in keeping your household safe.

There are two main types of lead tests for drinking water: at-home tests and lab-based tests. Each option has benefits, depending on what you need.

Different Types of Lead Tests

At-Home Lead Tests

- At-home tests are designed to be simple, affordable, and easy to use. Most tests involve collecting a water sample and using a test strip or vial at home to measure lead levels. These tests provide quick results without needing to send samples to a lab.

These tests are a good option for:

- Quick screening
- Households that want an easy first step
- Ongoing monitoring after plumbing changes

At-home tests may not measure lead as accurately as lab tests, but they are helpful for showing whether lead is a concern.

Lab-Based Lead Tests

Lab-based tests are usually sent to a certified lab and provide more detailed and accurate results. Lab tests often cost more and take longer, but they can provide a clearer picture of overall water quality.

Many certified lead testing laboratories in the United States are part of the National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program (NLLAP). NLLAP is run by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and helps make sure labs that test for lead meet strict standards for accuracy and quality.

Labs accredited through NLLAP use approved testing methods, follow quality control rules, and are regularly reviewed to make sure their results are reliable. Using an NLLAP-accredited lab helps ensure that your test results can be trusted when making decisions about your water, health, or next steps.

Everyday residents can use NLLAP-accredited labs by finding a certified lab in their state, contacting the lab directly, and following the lab's instructions for collecting and submitting a water sample.

Recommended At-Home Lead Tests

The following at-home lead tests are widely used and designed for household drinking water testing. These options were chosen because they are easy to find, easy to use, and suitable for households appropriate for community use.

Leaping Lynx Lead Test for Water

- [At-home lead test for drinking water](#)
- Simple testing process
- Instructional video included on the company website

Safe Home Lead in Drinking Water Test Kit

- [At-home lead test for drinking water](#)
- [Clear, step-by-step written instructions included](#)
- [Additional guidance available through a YouTube instruction video](#)

Silverlake Research Water Safe Lead Test Kit

- [At-home lead test for drinking water](#)
 - Designed for quick household screening
-

Lab tests may:

- Measure very low levels of lead
- Include other metals or measures of water quality
- Be required for official documentation or follow-up

For Further Information:

- [The National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program \(NLLAP\) | US EPA](#)
 - [Contact Information for Certification Programs and Certified Laboratories for Drinking Water | US EPA](#)
 - [National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program List | US EPA](#)
-

Choosing the Right Test for Your Household

When selecting a lead test, consider:

- Whether you want quick screening or detailed results
- The presence of children or pregnant people in the home
- The age of your plumbing and home
- Cost and turnaround time

No matter which test you choose, any detectable lead result should be taken seriously, and steps should be taken to lower exposure.

Important Notes About Testing

- Test results can vary depending on when and how the sample is collected
- Following instructions carefully is important for accurate results

Testing your water helps you decide whether steps like filtering, flushing pipes, or replacing plumbing materials are needed to lower lead exposure.

Next Steps After Testing Your Water

Evaluating Your Results

If Your Test Shows No Detectable Lead

- Remember that at-home test kits are not perfect. Some can produce false negatives.
 - You can still be exposed to lead from other parts of your home or from places you visit often, such as work, school, or places of worship that you may not have tested. This can include older faucets, solder, paint, dust, soil, or even certain hobbies.
 - If you or a family member have symptoms that make you worried about lead, talk to a doctor. A blood lead test is the most reliable way to know if someone has been exposed.
 - Some lead poisoning symptoms can look like symptoms of other health problems, so medical testing is important even if your water test looks safe.
-

If Your Test Result Is Unclear or You Still Have Concerns

- Some at-home test kits can show incorrect results if they are read too late. Similar to how expired or COVID tests that are read too late can provide inaccurate results. This is similar to expired tests or COVID tests that are read after the time limit.
 - Always check the result within the time window listed in the instructions.
 - If the strip looks unclear, faded, or you're not sure what the color means, take a photo of the test right away in good lighting. This helps you compare it to the instructions and keep a record.
 - If the result still seems confusing or doesn't match your concerns, consider sending a sample to a certified laboratory for confirmation.
-

If Your Test Shows Lead in the Water

- Stop using unfiltered tap water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.
 - Switch to bottled water or use an NSF-certified filter that removes lead.
 - Contact your doctor right away, especially for children, pregnant people, or anyone with symptoms. A blood test can confirm exposure.
 - Contact your local water utility to report your results and ask whether lead service lines or other plumbing materials may be causing the problem.
 - Take a clear photo of your test strip within the correct time window, since the result can change or fade if you look at it too late. Save the photo so you have an accurate record when discussing next steps with your doctor or water utility.
-

Learn more: Explore the other sections of this toolkit for additional information and guidance:

<http://bit.ly/3LNq02G>

Section E: Recommendations to Reduce Lead in Drinking Water

Even small amounts of lead can be a concern, and every home is different. These steps are organized from lowest cost and effort to highest, so you can choose what fits your situation and needs.

Tier 1: Simple, No-Cost or Low-Cost Actions

(Daily or Quick Steps)

These steps reduce exposure right away and work for most households:

- Run your tap before using it for drinking or cooking. Running the water helps flush out lead that has been sitting in pipes. Your water utility can tell you how long to flush your tap before using the water, based on where you live.
- Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Hot water can pull more lead from pipes.
- Clean your faucet aerator regularly. Lead particles, dirt, and debris can collect in the aerator and enter your water.
- Contact your local water authority. Ask if your home has a lead service line, and whether any work is planned nearby that could disturb pipes.
- Ask your water utility about free or low-cost testing. Some utilities test tap water for residents upon request.
- If you have a private well, contact your health department for help with testing, lead components, and local well water concerns.
- Talk with your doctor if you have symptoms or ongoing concerns. A blood lead test is the most accurate way to assess exposure.

Tier 2: Moderate-Cost Actions

(More Reliable Testing & Point-of-Use Protection)

These steps add stronger protection and more accurate information:

- Use a certified water filter at the tap that is approved to remove lead (such as NSF/ANSI Standard 53).
- Replace filter cartridges on time. Expired filters can stop removing lead effectively.
- Consider using bottled water for drinking and cooking if lead levels are high or if you are pregnant, mixing formula, or caring for young children (best as a short-term option).
- Have your water tested through a certified laboratory for more accurate results. Water sample results can vary depending on time of day, season, and how water is collected.
- Talk with your landlord if you rent. They may be responsible for repairs or fixture replacement.
- Take a photo of your test strip (at-home or lab results) within the correct time window to keep an accurate record.

Tier 3: Higher-Cost, Long-Term Actions

(Addressing Plumbing & Infrastructure)

These options reduce lead at the source and provide long-term protection:

- Check the materials in your plumbing system. Ask a licensed plumber or your water utility whether your home has:
 - A lead service line
 - Galvanized pipes
 - Lead solder connecting copper pipes
- Work with your local water authority to learn about options for replacing lead service lines and whether financial help is available.
- Replace older faucets, fixtures, or pipes that may contain lead. Look for products labeled “lead-free.”
- Stay aware of construction or pipe work near your home. Old service lines can temporarily release more lead into the water.
- Use certified filters or bottled water until replacement work is completed and follow your utility’s flushing guidance afterward.

Further Information

- [Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water | US EPA](#)
- [Consumer Tool for Identifying Point-of-Use and Pitcher Filters Certified to Reduce Lead in Drinking Water | EPA](#)
- [How to Identify Lead Free Certification Marks for Pipes, Fittings, Fixtures, Solder, and Flux Used for Drinking Water](#)

Learn more: Explore the other sections of this toolkit for additional information and guidance:

<http://bit.ly/3LNq02G>

Section F: Other Sources of Lead

While drinking water is one common way people are exposed to lead, it's not the only source. Below are some other common ways children and adults can be exposed to lead. [You and your children may also be exposed to lead in ways that may not be obvious.](#)

Lead Exposure From Soil

Lead can stay in soil for decades. It often comes from old exterior paint, car exhaust from leaded gasoline used in the past, and older industrial sites. A recent national study found that about 25% of U.S. households have soil lead levels above the EPA's screening level. This means many families may be exposed to lead through soil. Soil near older homes or busy roads is especially likely to have higher levels. Lead is not easily taken up by most plants. The main risk is from swallowing or breathing in contaminated soil or dust, not from eating the plants themselves.

Where Soil Lead Hazards Are Most Common

Lead in soil is more likely in:

- Yards near homes built before 1978
 - Soil next to older garages, sheds, porches, or peeling exterior paint
 - Areas close to highways or busy roads
 - Bare play areas where children dig or sit
 - Soil disturbed during home repairs or construction
-

How to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Soil

Limit Contact With Bare Soil

- Cover soil with grass, mulch, clean soil, or compost to reduce direct contact.
- Use raised garden beds filled with clean soil when growing fruits and vegetables.
- Plant gardens away from older buildings or heavily trafficked roads.

Practice Good Hygiene

- Wear gloves when gardening and wash hands afterward.
- Wash children's hands after outdoor play.
- Remove shoes before entering the home to avoid tracking in soil.
- Change dirty clothes after gardening or yard work.

Prepare Produce Safely

- Wash all home-grown produce with water. A small amount of vinegar or soapy water can help remove soil.
 - Peel root vegetables and remove the outer leaves of leafy greens.
 - Remember: removing soil from produce removes most of the risk.
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How to Test Your Soil

Store-bought soil kits do not test for lead.

To check for lead and other metals, send soil samples to a certified lab. Many university and EPA-recognized labs offer testing for \$15–\$100. If results show 150 mg/kg or more, lead levels in soil are considered high. Options include:

- Using raised beds only
 - Replacing the top 2–4 inches of soil with clean soil
 - Planting ornamental (non-edible) plants in contaminated areas
-

Additional Resources

- [Penn State Extension Soil Lead Fact Sheet](#)
- [National Lead Lab Accreditation Program](#)
- [Lead in Soil](#)
- [Lead in Garden Soils | University of Maryland Extension](#)
- [Gardening in Lead Contaminate Gardens](#)
- [Growing Gardens in Urban Soils](#)
- [Soil Safety Resource Guide for Urban Food Growers](#)

Paint and Dust

Homes and buildings built before 1978 are more likely to contain lead-based paint. Even though the federal government banned lead paint in housing that year, millions of older homes still have it under newer layers of paint. Lead paint becomes dangerous when it peels, cracks, chips, or creates dust, especially on surfaces that children can chew on or that are used often such as windows, doors, stairs, and railings.

Lead dust is especially harmful because you can't see it. It forms when old paint breaks down, when painted surfaces rub together, or during home repairs like sanding, scraping, and demolition. Dust can settle on floors, toys, and furniture, and it can be easily breathed in or swallowed by children.

Where Lead-Based Paint and Lead Dust Can Be Found

- In any home or childcare building built before 1978
- Under layers of newer paint
- On windows, window sills, and frames
- On doors, door frames, stairs, banisters, and porches
- In soil around the home, especially near older buildings
- Inside the home after renovation work that disturbs painted surfaces

Lead dust can also get indoors from:

- Soil tracked in on shoes
- Clothing worn at jobs or hobbies that involve lead
- Old paint on surfaces that rub together (like opening and closing windows)

Steps to Reduce Exposure to Lead from Paint and Dust

Keep Painted Surfaces in Good Condition

- Check for peeling, chipping, chalking, or cracked paint and address problems quickly.
- Wipe floors, window sills, and surfaces weekly with a wet cloth or mop.
- Clean up paint chips carefully and avoid sweeping, which spreads dust.

Use Safe Cleaning Practices

- Clean with warm water and an all-purpose cleaner.
- Rinse mops and sponges often and rinse them again after cleaning.
- Remove shoes at the door to avoid tracking in contaminated soil or dust.

Protect Children

- Wash children's hands, toys, and bottles regularly.
- Keep children away from peeling paint and bare soil.
- Prevent chewing on window sills or other painted surfaces.

During Renovation or Repairs

- Hire a contractor who is certified to work safely with lead for any work in homes built before 1978. Renovation, repair, and painting can release large amounts of harmful dust.
- Never sand, scrape, or heat old paint without proper training and safety measures.
- Ask a contractor to test for lead paint before starting work.

If You Rent

- Notify your landlord if there is peeling or damaged paint.
- Ask about steps they can take to fix hazards safely.

More Information

- [Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home | EPA](#)
- [Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Program | US EPA](#)
- [How to Make Your Home Lead-Safe | US EPA](#)
-  [Removing Lead Safely](#)

Learn more: Explore the other sections of this toolkit for additional information and guidance:

<http://bit.ly/3LNq02G>

Other Exposures

Lead can also be found in certain jobs, hobbies, and everyday products. Knowing where these risks exist helps you take steps to protect yourself and your family.

Jobs

People who work with construction materials, metal, paint, or batteries may be exposed to lead dust or fumes. Common jobs with lead exposure include:

- Construction, demolition, and home renovation
 - Painting or sanding older buildings
 - Battery recycling, metal casting, or smelting
 - Auto repair or welding
 - Law enforcement or military work at firing ranges
-

Hobbies

Some hobbies use materials that contain lead or create lead dust. Examples include:

- Shooting or reloading ammunition
 - Making pottery, ceramics, or stained glass
 - Casting fishing weights or bullets
 - Restoring old furniture or cars
-

Consumer Products

Lead can sometimes be found in imported or older household products, such as:

- Jewelry, toys, or ceramics with lead-based paint or glaze
- Traditional medicines, cosmetics, or spices from outside the U.S.

- Imported pottery or cookware not labeled “lead-free”
 - Home-distilled alcohol (like moonshine) made with lead-soldered equipment
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How to Stay Safe

- Wash your hands before eating, drinking, or touching your face.
 - Keep work and hobby materials out of living spaces.
 - Shower and change clothes before getting in your car or going home.
 - Wash work clothes separately from family laundry.
 - Avoid using imported or antique cookware unless it’s certified lead-free.
-

For More Information

- Recall information: Get information on recalls from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) website [CPSC.gov](https://www.cpsc.gov) or by calling 1-800-638-2772.
- [About Lead in Jobs, Hobbies, or Other Activities | Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention | CDC](#)
- Stay up to date with [CPSC product recalls](#)
- [About Lead in the Workplace](#)
- [Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home | EPA](#)

Section G: For More Information

In Summary

Even if your drinking water tests come back negative, lead exposure can still occur from many other sources, especially for children. While cases of severe lead poisoning have decreased significantly over time, legacy pollution—such as old paint, soil contamination, and aging infrastructure—continues to pose risks in many communities.

If you or a family member have symptoms of lead exposure, or if you know you have been exposed, the most reliable way to confirm exposure is a blood lead test. Talk with your doctor about your concerns and testing options.

Trusted Sources for More Information

The organizations below are leaders in public health, medical research, and environmental protection. They provide **accurate, science-based information** to help residents understand lead exposure, protect their families, and find local and national support resources.

Exploring these resources can help you learn how lead affects health, where exposure can occur, and what steps you can take to stay safe.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The CDC works to protect the health and safety of people across the United States through research, education, and disease prevention. It provides information on how lead affects the body, blood lead testing, and ways to reduce exposure. [About Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention](#)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The EPA is responsible for protecting human health and the environment. It sets and enforces standards for safe drinking water, oversees lead pipe replacement efforts, and offers guidance on reducing lead in homes and communities. [Lead | US EPA](#) ; [Private Drinking Water Wells | US EPA](#) ;

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

The Virginia Department of Health promotes and protects the health of Virginians through community programs, disease prevention, and environmental health initiatives. It provides state- and locality-specific information on lead testing, water quality, and support services. [Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program](#)
[Lead Safe Program – Richmond City Health Department](#)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

The NIH is the nation's leading medical research agency. It supports research on how environmental toxins like lead affect the brain, heart, and development, and funds studies that improve public and community health. [Lead Exposures](#)

Staying Informed

Staying informed is one of the best ways to protect your household and community. By using these trusted resources, residents can find credible health guidance, understand their risks, and take confident steps toward a cleaner, safer environment for everyone.

Learn more: Explore the other sections of this toolkit for additional information and guidance:
<http://bit.ly/3LNq02G>