

## **PRESS RELEASE**



**City Manager's Office**  
**231-398-2801**

**FROM:** William Gambill, City Manager

**DATE:** November 8, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Public Advisory: City Response to Lead Testing Results

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The City of Manistee conducts periodic testing of tap water in homes for lead and copper. In recently collected samples from 20 homes in the City of Manistee, three (3) of the samples tested exceeded the 15 parts per billion (ppb) Action Level of lead established by the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act. The Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) evaluates compliance with the Action Level based on the 90th percentile of lead and copper results collected in each round of sampling. The lead 90th percentile for the City of Manistee's water supply was 28 ppb, which exceeds the Action Level of 15 ppb.

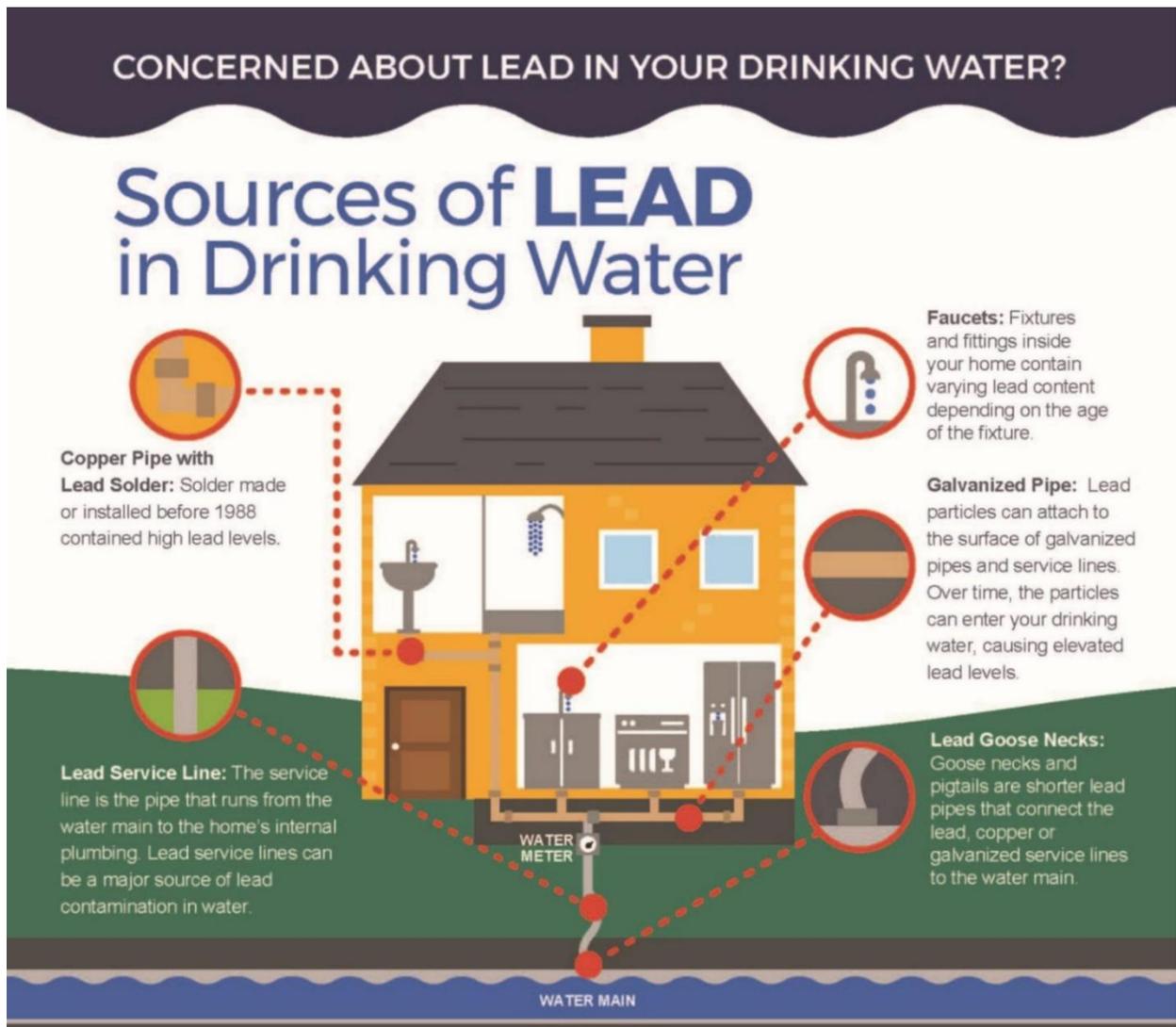
The "Action Level" is not a health-based standard, but it is a level that triggers additional actions including, but not limited to, increased investigative sampling of water quality and educational outreach to customers in accordance with the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act. The goal for lead in drinking water is 0 ppb; there is no safe level of lead in the blood. It is important to note that the City's exceedance is not a violation of the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act.

Since 1994, the City of Manistee has regularly tested for lead and copper. In 2019, the City began actively searching for lead service lines in the system through the drinking water pilot program. When lead services are found, they are immediately replaced. The City has recently been awarded a Drinking Water Asset Management grant from EGLE which will also help identify areas in need of upgrades. This grant will fund water system inventory (GIS), GPS asset survey for future work, distribution system material inventory and investigation, condition assessment and rate sufficiency analysis.

Because three (3) sites were over the Action Level for lead, the City of Manistee would like to share some ways you can reduce your exposure to lead since lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water and other sources.

"This public advisory is the first step to raise awareness and ultimately improve water quality for our customers," said City Manager William Gambill. "It is important that customers are informed about the potential sources of lead in their drinking water so that appropriate actions can be taken to eliminate it."

Lead can enter drinking water when in contact with pipes, solder, home/building interior plumbing, fittings and fixtures that contain lead. Homes with lead service lines have an increased risk of having high lead levels in drinking water. The more time water has been sitting in your home's pipes, the more lead it may contain. Therefore, if your water has not been used for several hours, run the water before using it for drinking or cooking. This flushes lead-containing water from the pipes. Additional flushing may be required for homes that have been vacant or have a longer service line.



EPA Infographic - Sources of Lead in Drinking Water

### **How to reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water**

- Run your water to flush out lead-containing water.
  - If you **do not** have a lead service line, run the water for 30 seconds to two minutes, or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature.
  - If you **do** have a lead service line, run the water for at least five minutes to flush water from your home or building's plumbing and the lead service line.
- Everyone can consider using a filter to reduce lead in drinking water. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) recommends that any household with a child or pregnant woman use cold water and a certified lead filter to remove lead from their drinking water, especially when preparing baby formula.
  - Look for filters that are tested and certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for lead reduction.
  - For filters to work properly, follow the manufacturer's instructions.
  - If your household has a child or pregnant woman and are not able to afford the cost of a lead filter, please contact your County Health Department.
- **Do not use hot water** for drinking, preparing food, or cooking, or preparing baby formula.
- **Do not boil** your water as boiling will not reduce the amount of lead in water.
- Clean your faucet aerator to remove trapped debris.

Check whether your home has a lead service line. The City will soon send out a comprehensive public education document about lead in drinking water. Also, for the next calendar year the City will be collecting 40 samples (increasing from 20), every six months and reviewing the results to determine if corrective actions are necessary to reduce corrosion in household plumbing.

If you are a City of Manistee water customer and would like your service line inspected, contact the City of Manistee Department of Public Works at (231)723-7132. If you would like to have your water tested for lead the DPW can provide a list of certified laboratories.

The City is working collaboratively with Manistee County Health Department and the State of Michigan to make free water filters available for qualifying households. To qualify, you must be:

- Connected to the City of Manistee water supply
- Have a pregnant woman and/or child(ren) under the age of 18 living or spending considerable time in the home, and
- Be on WIC, Medicaid, or be willing to say that you cannot afford the cost of a water filter.

Filter distribution will begin on Friday, November 12, 2021, at the City of Manistee Department of Public Works, 280 Washington Street. On and after that date, qualified individuals can pick up filters Monday – Friday between 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

If you are operating a food establishment such as a store, restaurant, bar, or food manufacturing establishment please visit this page [www.michigan.gov/mdardleadinfo](http://www.michigan.gov/mdardleadinfo) for specific information for food firms.

For more information, please visit their page [www.michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe](http://www.michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe) or [www.michigan.gov/EGLLEadPublicAdvisory](http://www.michigan.gov/EGLLEadPublicAdvisory). Additional information regarding lead can be found at the City of Manistee’s website: [www.manisteemi.gov](http://www.manisteemi.gov).

<p><b>Is it OK to use lead-containing water to wash my hands?</b></p>		
<p><b>Yes!</b> Human skin does not easily absorb lead from water.</p>		
	<p>Even if you have lead in your drinking water, you can wash your hands with water that is not filtered or flushed.</p> <p>Public Health advises residents to wash hands often and for at least 20 seconds with soap and water to help prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).</p>	<p>You can use water that has not been filtered or flushed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Showering or bathing (avoid swallowing the water)</li> <li>○ Washing hands, dishes, or clothes</li> <li>○ Cleaning</li> </ul>
<p>To learn more please visit, <a href="http://Michigan.gov/coronavirus">Michigan.gov/coronavirus</a> or <a href="http://Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe">Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe</a></p>		

- c. City Clerk  
Manistee News Advocate