

An Advisory to the Drinking Water Customers of the City of Benton Harbor

Every three years, the City of Benton Harbor conducts testing of tap water in the City's homes for lead and copper as required by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This summer, we collected water samples from thirty homes. Eight of those homes were above the Action Level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) for lead. The 90th percentile of samples was 22 ppb for lead.

Exceeding the Action Level triggers additional actions including, but not limited to, increased investigative sampling of water quality and educational outreach to customers. Elevated levels of lead in the drinking water can cause health concerns. The most important thing you can do is run water to flush out potential lead contaminants.

You can reduce your risk of lead exposure from water using the information below:

- Run your water to stable, cold temperatures (usually 3 to 5 minutes) before drinking to flush out any potential contaminants.
- Use cold water tap for drinking or cooking.
- Use bottled water to prepare baby formula.
- Do not boil your water as boiling will not reduce the amount of lead in water.
- Water is safe for bathing.

The Berrien County Health Department continues to monitor the blood lead levels of children six and under throughout the county by individual community. There have been no detected increases in the trend of elevated blood lead levels in Benton Harbor children; there is a downward trend of elevated blood lead levels continuing into 2018.

This is the first of several informational notices you will receive about lead in drinking water. A more comprehensive document and additional information regarding lead in drinking water is available at the MDEQ website at: www.michigan.gov/deqleadpublicadvisory. Additionally, the City will be collecting many samples every six months and reviewing the results to determine if corrective actions are necessary to reduce corrosion in household plumbing.

Questions about the water system, water testing, health concerns, or getting your child's blood lead level tested can be directed to the Benton Harbor Water Response Hotline at 1-800-815-5485 from 8:30-5:00pm.

Additional information regarding lead can be found on the City's website: www.bhcity.us or at the MDEQ website at: www.michigan.gov/deqleadpublicadvisory or the Berrien County Health Department website at: www.bchdmi.org.