

## Lead and Copper Rule Testing Talking Points

- Every Michigander deserves access to safe, clean, healthy drinking water.
- All Michiganders deserve to know that the state and local governments are working together to protect their health and are working every day to provide clean drinking water.
- Our highest priority is to support the health and safety of Michigan families.
- The revised rules are under the authority of the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act.
- The recent changes to the Lead and Copper Rules put Michigan on track to steadily reduce and ultimately eliminate lead service lines.
- Drinking water produced by Michigan municipal water supplies does not contain lead. Lead gets into the water supply from infrastructure containing lead components such as service leads or the home's internal plumbing.
- Michigan's new water testing provides valuable information in identifying possible source areas of lead in service lines and in homes that may impact drinking water in our homes.
- Michigan's revised Lead and Copper Rules affect Michigan community water supplies by requiring communities to provide complete inventories of water service lines and to remove all lead service lines
- If, as anticipated, new sampling requirements at some locations result in higher numbers, it is NOT because water quality has changed. It is because we have changed our testing procedure and are analyzing water in the residential service lines differently, so we proactively ensure that adequate corrosion controls are in place to help prevent lead from pipes getting into the water. If Michigan's more rigorous sampling procedure was required by the EPA for the rest of the country, they would also be reporting higher values at some locations.
- The state is taking immediate steps to prepare for and respond to the new testing results, including:
  - First, the State is launching a public awareness campaign to help families understand the new test results and some simple steps they can take to better protect themselves from lead exposure from their individual service lines and/or home plumbing.
  - The campaign will focus on increasing transparency and communication with Michiganders as these changes go into effect.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: What are the specific changes to the rule?**

**A:** The significant changes under the new rule are as follows:

Lead sampling in homes with lead service lines now involve a first liter water sample and a new fifth liter water sample to represent water that has been contained in the lead service line.

Preliminary service line inventories are due to EGLE by January 1, 2020.

By January 1, 2021, communities that have lead service lines must begin replacing them.

Water supplies are required to replace an average of 5 percent of their lead service lines every year for the next 20 years unless an alternate schedule is approved by EGLE.

Water supplies are now responsible for removing the entire lead service line from the main to the home including all costs.

Partial lead service line replacements are now banned.

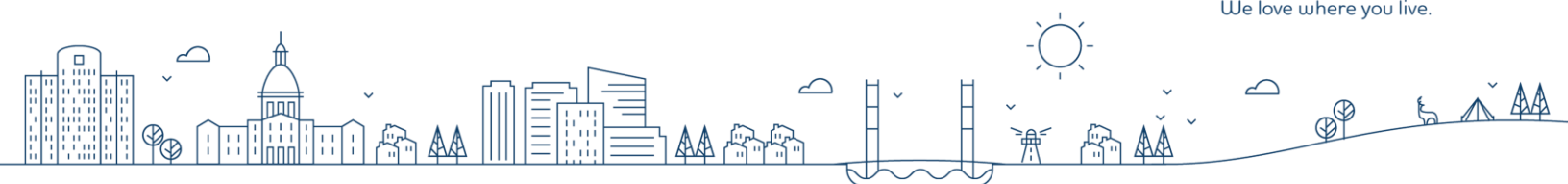
Complete service line inventories are due to EGLE by January 1, 2025.

The Action Level for lead in drinking water will be lowered from the current level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) to 12 ppb on January 1, 2025.

### **Q: Why might some homes show high lead levels when tested under the new sampling methods?**

**A:** If, as anticipated, new sampling requirements at some locations result in higher numbers, it is NOT because water quality has changed. It is because we have changed our testing procedure and are analyzing water in the residential service lines differently. The previous rules only tested the first liter of tap water. When there are high levels of lead at the first liter, the source is likely inside the home, such as lead faucets, pipes or lead solder on pipes. The new rules also test the fifth liter, which is water that has been sitting in the pipe that is the service line from the water main in the street to the meter in your home. When there is a high result at the fifth liter, it may mean additional corrosion control or removal of your line is necessary. If Michigan's more rigorous sampling

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procedure was required by the EPA for the rest of the country, they would also be reporting higher values at some locations

**Q: What will the state do if a community has levels of lead above the action level?**

**A:** All results will be examined by EGLE. If a community has test results for a home or homes that exceed the new standard, it will trigger a systematic response from both EGLE and MDHHS. In particular, EGLE’s regulations require that local water systems take immediate steps to optimize water quality and lower lead levels. Consumers should know that if higher levels of lead are present in the first liter of water sampled, it is a strong indication that lead is contained in the interior plumbing fixtures. Where it is determined that lead exposure in drinking water is due to fixtures and plumbing inside the home, replacement activities and expenses are the responsibility of the homeowner. Funding assistance, when available, may be relayed to the homeowner by local public health officials.

MDHHS works closely with local public health agencies to educate families and provide public health services. The Governor has also secured \$3 million in supplemental funding to bolster response efforts in these communities by increasing support for local public health agencies, educating families, offering water filters to vulnerable populations, and investigating homes with high lead test results.

**Q: What should I do if I am concerned about my family’s health?**

**A:** Citizens may request that their water supplier conduct water quality testing and may also contact their local health department to have their blood tested for the presence of lead. Medical attention is required only when certain levels of lead exist in the bloodstream.

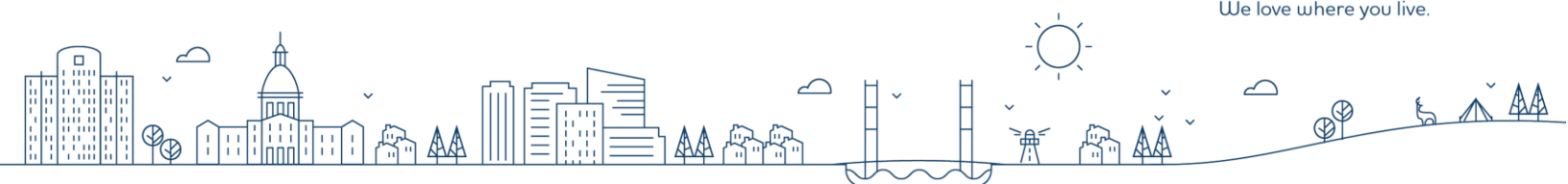
Additional steps that can be taken:

Use an NSF-certified filter and only use cold water for drinking or cooking.

Use filtered or alternative source of water for powdered infant formula.

Run your water before using it for drinking or cooking (also called flushing your lines).

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**Q: What do I do if I am concerned about other sources of lead in my home?**

**A:** Lead can come from many sources: lead-based paint chips, dust, soil, household items, and foods. Lead water pipes can sometimes be found in older homes; and drinking water faucets manufactured before 2014 were allowed to contain up to 8% lead. Elevated blood levels in children are primarily caused by ingestion of lead from paint, dust, and soil.

To reduce lead exposure in the home:

Regularly wash hands, toys, and horizontal surfaces with a damp cloth or paper towel (wet cleaning methods).

Vacuum with a High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filtered vacuum.

Take shoes off before entering the home or living areas.

Wash hands before eating to avoid accidentally eating lead dust and soil.

Grow fruits and vegetables in raised beds.

Hire certified lead professionals to assist with home renovations in pre-1978 housing.

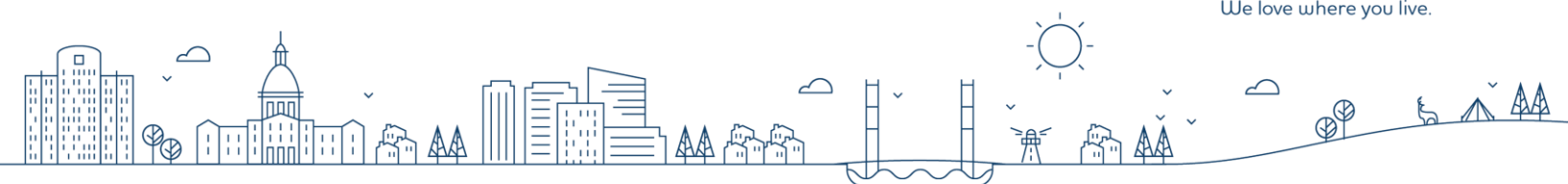
**Q: How can residents get more information or have more questions answered?**

**A:** To allow for further education and conversation surrounding these changes to the Michigan Safe Drinking Water, EGLE and MDHHS will be hosting three virtual town halls on July 9, 10, and 11. To attend the virtual townhalls go to [www.michigan.gov/mileadsafe](http://www.michigan.gov/mileadsafe) on either July 9, 10, 11<sup>th</sup> at 6pm to participate.

**Q: When is the Lead and Copper Rule sampling data due and when can communities expect to learn their results?**

**A:** Sample results are due for approximately 100 communities on July 10, 2019 and approximately 500 more on October 10, 2019. It will take an average of one or two months for EGLE to process all of the results and develop the 90th percentile, which is what is compared to the Action Level.

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**Q: What is the 90th percentile?**

**A:** The lead and copper rule requires the 90th percentile to be calculated and compared to the Action Level.

The 90th percentile is a measure of statistical distribution, not unlike the median. The median is the middle value. The median is the value for which 50% of the values were bigger, and 50% smaller. The 90th percentile tells you the value for which 90% of the data points are smaller and 10% are bigger.

**Q: Where can we see the results?**

**A:** In an effort to increase transparency and communication, once results have been verified, the 90th percentile will be posted on the [Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe](https://www.michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe) website. The 90th percentile is based on sampling done at individual homes; the data from those individual homes will not be posted online.

**Q: If a water system tests over the lead limit BEFORE the official state requirement for lead line removal will they have to remove those lines sooner?**

**A:** No, they would need to follow the current requirement of beginning to replace lead service lines at a rate of 7 percent per year if they cannot address the issue via treatment or other means.

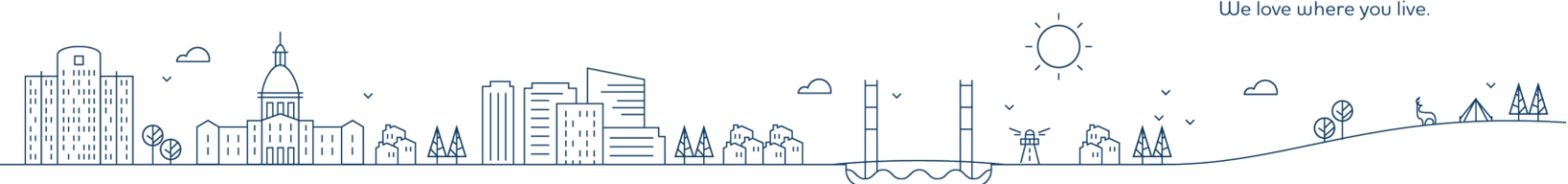
**Q: Who is paying for privately-owned lead line removal?**

**A:** The water supplier must use revenue it collects from customers to pay for lead line removal. There are grants and loans available from the state to assist with this cost.

**Q: When do all of the lead service lines in Michigan need to be removed?**

**A:** The new rule requires an average of 5 percent of lead service lines to be removed each year unless an alternative schedule is approved by EGLE. In most cases, lead service lines will be removed in 20 years.

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**Q: What will the new lead Action Level be for the state?**

**A:** Beginning on January 1, 2025, the Lead Action Level will be lowered to 12 ppb. Until then, the Action Level is 15 ppb.

**Q: How are homes prioritized for testing?**

**A:** Water supplies must take compliance samples at a select subset of homes based on risk factors identified in the regulations. Homes with more risk for exposure are prioritized. Homes with lead services lines are given highest priority.

**Q: What else is being done to clean up drinking water around the state?**

**A:** The Governor has proposed a budget that cleans up drinking water, fixes our roads and closes the skills-gap. The Governor remains fully committed to ensuring every community has access to safe, clean drinking water. That's why the budget includes:

\$120 million to improve our drinking water infrastructure. This funding would assist with ongoing service line replacements, research and treatment of PFAS, and research on how best to optimize water distribution systems.

\$37.5 million for lead and copper rule implementation

\$30 million for PFAS and emerging contaminants

\$7.5 million for identify best practices for water affordability and sustainable rates.

\$40 million for Drinking Water Revolving Fund (DWRF) Loan Forgiveness to increase participation through grant process.

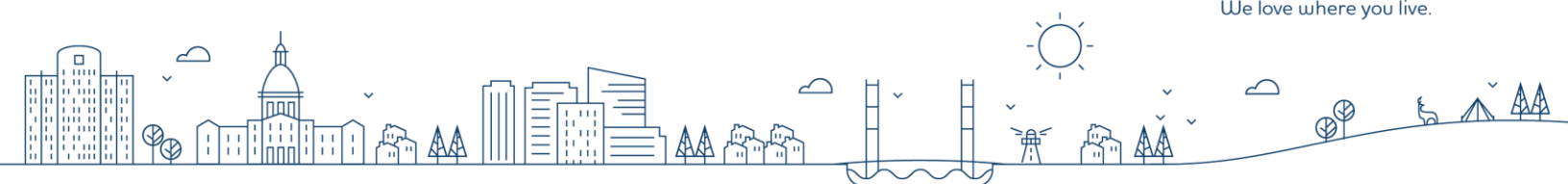
\$5 million for research and innovation

\$60 million to install hydration stations in school buildings.

**Q: Is this similar to what took place in Flint?**

**A:** No. The problem in Flint resulted from failure to apply proper corrosion control within its drinking water source. The new sampling requirements are designed so that we are more proactive in assuring that proper corrosion controls are in place.

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While Flint's water quality has been meeting state and federal standards since July of 2016, we are determined to continue working toward restoring trust in state government and ensuring that - not just Flint residents – but every Michigander has access to safe, clean drinking water.

The city of Flint continues to remove and replace lead and galvanized steel service lines, creating a safe and lasting infrastructure. The city anticipates that pipe replacement should be complete at the end of July.

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