

**York Water Company**  
**FAQ for Lead**  
**March, 2017**

**Q: Is there lead in the water supply?**

No. Water that leaves our filter plant is of the highest quality and does not have lead.

**Q: Can you explain the testing and results?**

York Water just completed its lead test sampling, which is required every 3 years. Per DEP and EPA guidelines, we are required to test 50 high-risk customers to see if there's any lead at their water tap. DEP and EPA designate a threshold that if more than 5 of those 50 tests exceed their action level of 15 PPB, then we need to initiate additional activities to reduce the amount of lead in the water. We had 6 samples exceed the action level.

**Q: Who does this affect?**

This news mostly impacts our customers that have a lead service line. Because we stopped installing lead service lines in 1934 and have replaced many of the original lines, less than 3% of the properties in our service area have a York Water lead service line. Most all of the other York Water customers have copper, plastic, or steel lines and are much less likely to be impacted. However, all customers should be aware of ways to reduce lead in their drinking water and read the "Lead Information" pamphlet that they received in the mail or is available at [www.yorkwater.com](http://www.yorkwater.com).

**Q: How do I know if I'm impacted?**

We sent those customers with a company-owned lead service line a letter in October. This letter went to 3% of our customers, or 1,660 properties. If you didn't receive a letter and your house was built after 1934, you shouldn't be impacted. However, even if you didn't receive a letter and your house was built before around 1940, you should check to see if you have a customer-owned lead service line. Also, all customers should be aware of ways to reduce lead in their drinking water and read the "Lead Information" pamphlet that they received in the mail or is available at [www.yorkwater.com](http://www.yorkwater.com).

**Q: If I receive a letter does that mean I have a lead problem?**

Just because you have a lead service line, it does not mean you have a problem. Only a small portion of lead service lines may be exceeding the action level.

**Q: What is York Water required to do after it exceeds the action level?**

The Department of Environmental Protection requires us to notify all of our customers, provide education on how to reduce lead in water, and begin replacing 7% of the company-owned lead service lines per year. We are not required to replace the customer-owned lead service line.

**Q: What will York Water do if I have a company-owned lead service line?**

York Water is going above and beyond the requirements. We have already been replacing 7% of the service lines, so we will increase that to 25% per year and also:

- We will offer to test your water for free
- We will replace the entire lead service line, from water main to your house, at no charge to you over the next 3-4 years.
- We will give you a 200 gallon credit per month for flushing until we get your lead service line replaced.

York Water is offering to test all of our lead service line customers' water, at no charge, to verify how much lead may be coming from the pipes. As we get test results back, we'll make sure if a property does have a higher reading, we'll schedule their lead service line for early replacement. In the meantime, simple flushing will solve the problem.

**Q: Is York Water replacing all company-owned lead service lines, even if the test shows good results?**

Yes. The American Water Works Association recently stated that all lead service lines should be replaced. York Water will be working with our customers to eliminate all of our company-owned lead service lines over the next 3-4 years as a potential source of lead so that we work towards making York a "lead free" community.

**Q: If I didn't receive a letter, do I have anything to worry about?**

Was your house built before about 1940? In that case, your customer-owned service line could be made of lead. However, all customers should be aware of ways to reduce lead in their drinking water and read the "Lead Information" pamphlet that they received in the mail or is available at [www.yorkwater.com](http://www.yorkwater.com).

**Q: What's the difference between a company-owned and customer-owned lead service line?**

In most water systems, including ours, the utility doesn't own the entire service line. York Water owns from the water main to the curb line. The property owner is responsible for the service from the curb line into house. Since we didn't install the customer-owned service our records don't indicate what material it is made of, but if it was after about 1940, it is likely not lead.

**Q: What if I live in a pre-1940 house and I didn't get a letter but I've discovered I have a customer-owned lead service line?**

York Water is going above and beyond the requirements and if you request it, we will provide:

- A free test of your water
- If the test results come back above the action level, we'll provide 200 gallons credit per month for flushing until your lead service line is replaced, or a follow on test shows the water to be below the action level.
- After we complete the replacement of our company-owned service lines over the next 3-4 years, we will offer to replace your customer-owned lead service at little or no cost to you.
- York Water will replace up to 400 of these lines per year. If you request a water test and its above the action level for lead, we'll prioritize the replacement of your lead service line. In the meantime, simple flushing will take care of the problem.

**Q: What if I recently replaced my lead service line, can I get a refund?**

- Yes. In order to be fair to those customers who recently replaced their lead service line at their cost, York Water will offer a rebate for some of your costs if you replaced your lead service line in the past 4 years. If you replaced it between 3/2013 and 3/2014, we'll send you a check for 20% of the cost; If you replaced it between 3/2014 and 3/2015, we'll send you a check for 40% of the cost; Between 3/2015 and 3/2016, 60% of the cost; Between 3/2016 and 3/2017, 80% of the cost. Please contact us for specific details and requirements.

**Q. How can I reduce lead in my water?**

**1. Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking.** The longer water resides in your home's plumbing, the more lead it may contain. If the water has sat unused for more than 6 hours, flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15-30 seconds. If your house has a lead service line to the water main, you may have to flush the water for a longer time, about 3 gallons of water, which should take about 3 minutes, before drinking. Toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of your home's plumbing system, but you still need to flush the water in each faucet about 15-30 seconds before using it for drinking or cooking.

**2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula. Lead dissolves more easily in hot water.

**3. Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.

**4. Look for alternative sources or treatment of water.** The NSF Consumer Affairs Office has specific information about lead treatment at: <http://www.nsf.org/consumer-resources/health-and-safety-tips/water-quality-treatment-tips/lead-in-drinking-water>

**5. Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.** There are lead check swabs that can detect lead on plumbing surfaces such as solder and pipes. These swabs can be purchased at plumbing and home improvement stores. Consider having lead-containing pipes and fixtures replaced, or use the precautions listed above.

[York Water's Lead Information pamphlet at www.yorkwater.com provides additional information.](http://www.yorkwater.com)

**So, to conclude...**

Water that leaves our filter plant and flows thru our water mains does not have lead.

Because we stopped installing lead service lines in 1934 and have replaced many of the original lines, this amounts to fewer than 3% of the properties in our service area, however, there may be other pre-1940 homes that have a lead service line on the customer's side, and any customer with a lead service line, out of an abundance of caution, should run about 3 gallons of water out of their tap, or about 3 minutes, if the line has been sitting idle for over 6 hours. However, all customers should be aware of ways to reduce lead in their drinking water and read the "Lead Information" pamphlet that they received in the mail or is available at [www.yorkwater.com](http://www.yorkwater.com).

York Water recognizes that lead in our communities needs to be eliminated, whether its paint in old houses, or lead in plumbing. York Water, as a member of our community for 200 years, will be working with our customers to eliminate all lead service lines over the next several years.