



Green Bay Water Utility

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE LEAD IN GREEN BAY DRINKING WATER ***Green Bay Water Utility Says Fewer Than 2.4 Percent of Service Lines Affected***

GREEN BAY, Wis. (May 29, 2018) – Since finding lead levels in the water above the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) action limit in some homes in 2016, the Green Bay Water Utility has made aggressive efforts to “Get the Lead Out” of the City of Green Bay. The City has approximately 865 utility-owned lead service lines remaining Citywide; those now affect fewer than 2.4 percent percent of Utility customers.

This is a significant reduction from 1,438 utility-owned lead services at the beginning of 2017; Utility crews have worked diligently to replace utility-owned lead services.

Although the primary sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil, the EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person’s potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. The Green Bay Water Utility takes this seriously, and began conducting routine monitoring for lead in drinking water in 1992. The Utility is concerned about the health of their residents as lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources, especially for pregnant women and children ages 6 years and younger.

Please note: **Green Bay Water Utility’s source water, water mains and finished drinking water do NOT contain lead.** When water is in contact with pipes (or service lines) and plumbing containing lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1960 are more likely to have lead pipes and homes built before 1984 are more likely to have lead solder.

Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, lead can lead to serious health problems. The Utility has taken several actions to address the concern of lead in drinking water:

- **Is performing unidirectional flushing (UDF) of half the City’s water mains again this summer.** This process removes minerals from the walls of water mains known to contribute to lead levels in homes. This summer, the Utility will flush approximately half its water mains using this process, and will flush the other half in spring/summer of 2019.
- As noted above, the **Utility has 865 known utility-owned lead services left to replace**, and are working diligently to do so by our self-imposed deadline of Dec. 31, 2020.
- **Making homeowners with known private-side lead services aware of grant funding available** to assist them in replacing the lead pipes on their properties. Of the 217 private properties identified as having a lead service, 166 replacements are complete and 51 remain to be replaced. Of those 51, 33 have signed agreements with preapproved contractors for their replacements; we still need agreements for 18 of them.

Homeowners with privately owned lead water service lines are required to replace them under Green Bay Ordinance 21.11.

If you have received communication from the Utility regarding private-side lead service, please complete your paperwork as grant funding is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and **is anticipated to be depleted by late 2018/early 2019**. Questions about the existing private side lead service replacement program can be posed to Justin Hewitt at (920) 785-7904.

- **Coordinating lead service line replacements** on a priority basis on streets that are being resurfaced and reconstructed via the City of Green Bay’s Department of Public Works.
- **Striving to have all known utility-owned lead service lines removed and replaced by Dec. 31, 2020.** “This is the single most effective way to reduce lead exposure, and that’s why we are committed to such an aggressive timeframe for removing and replacing these lead services,” said Nancy Quirk, general manager, Green Bay Water Utility.

Here are some of the most impactful steps you can take to reduce your potential exposure to lead in your drinking water:

- **The fastest, easiest and most effective way is to run your water before using it.** Run the water for one to two minutes to flush water out of interior plumbing and to obtain water that hasn’t been sitting in your interior pipes from the water main on the street. If water hasn’t been used for several hours, run water until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature you can use it for drinking or cooking.
- **Remove and clean aerators from all faucets in your home.** Aerators are the small attachments at the tips of faucets that regulate the flow of water. Over time, deposits can build up; fortunately, cleaning them takes only a few minutes. For more information, visit www.gbwater.org and click on the instructions under the “What’s New” column on the home page.

Other tips for reducing your exposure to lead in your water are available at <http://gbwater.org/leadtips>.

Water quality test data for the Green Bay Water Utility can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources website at dnr.wi.gov under public water system ID 40503562.

About the Green Bay Water Utility

For more than 130 years, Green Bay Water Utility has been supplying high-quality drinking water at a reasonable cost to customers in Green Bay and in several surrounding communities. With offices located at 631 S. Adams St. in Green Bay, the Green Bay Water Utility is dedicated to supplying friendly, convenient and dependable service to all customers. For more information, visit gbwater.org.

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