

Village of Herkimer  
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Site of Historic Fort Dayton  
Settled 1725

## General Public Education Notice

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

*The Village of Herkimer found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this notice closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.*

This notice is brought to you by:

The Village of Herkimer, Manion Heights & East Herkimer Water Districts (including Highland Ave., McKennan Rd. and Steuben Hill water customers).

State Water System ID#:

Herkimer #NY2102306, Manion Heights #NY2130045, & East Herkimer #NY2102300

Date: January 28, 2020

### Health Effects of Lead

*Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.*

### Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The primary source of lead exposure for most children is lead-based paint. Other sources of lead exposure include lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials.

Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, some children's metal jewelry, and some traditional pottery. Although most lead exposure occurs when people eat paint chips and inhale dust, or from contaminated soil, exposure to lead can come from lead in drinking water. Lead is rarely found in source water, but enters tap water through corrosion of plumbing materials. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have lead pipes or lead solder. However, new homes are also at risk: even legally "lead-free" plumbing may contain up to 0.25% lead on a weighted average. The most common is with brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and fixtures which can leach significant amounts of lead into the water, especially hot water. Exposure to lead is a significant health concern, especially for young children and infants whose growing bodies tend to absorb more lead than the average adult. If you are concerned about lead exposure, parents should ask their health care providers about testing children for high levels of lead in the blood.



## Steps You Can Take To Reduce Your Exposure To Lead In Your Water

1. **Run your water to flush out lead.** Run water for 30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking, if it hasn't been used for several hours. This flushes lead-containing water from the pipes.
2. **Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.
3. **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
4. **Replace your plumbing fixtures if they are found to contain lead.** Plumbing materials including brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law previously allowed end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8 percent lead to be labeled as "lead free." As of January 4, 2014, end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, fittings and valves, must meet the new "lead-free" definition of having no more than 0.25 percent lead on a weighted average. Visit the National Sanitation Foundation website at: [http://www.nsf.org/newsroom\\_pdf/Lead\\_free\\_certification\\_marks.pdf](http://www.nsf.org/newsroom_pdf/Lead_free_certification_marks.pdf) to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures and how to identify lead-free certification marks on new fixtures.
5. **Use bottled water or use a water filter.** If your home is served by a lead service line, and/or if lead containing plumbing materials are found to be in your home, you may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or visit <http://www.nsf.org/consumer-resources/what-is-nsf-certification/faucets-plumbing-certification/lead-older-homes>, for a consumer guide of approved water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality. Any measure you take to reduce your exposure to lead should be continued until the lead source(s) has been minimized or eliminated.

### Should you test your water for lead?

If lead-containing plumbing materials are identified in your home, you may want to consider testing your water for lead to determine how much lead is in your drinking water. Call us at (315) 866-3303 to find out how to get your water tested for lead. The NYS Department of Health also offers a free lead testing program for residents that can be accessed by calling (518) 402-7650 or by visiting [https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/free\\_lead\\_testing\\_pilot\\_program.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/free_lead_testing_pilot_program.htm)

### Should your child be tested for lead?

New York Public Health Law requires primary health care providers to screen each child for blood lead levels at one and two years of age as part of routine well-child care. In addition, at each routine well-child visit, or at least annually if a child has not had routine well-child visits, primary health care providers assess each child who is at least six-months of age, but under six years of age, for high lead exposure. Each child found to be at risk for high lead exposure is screened or referred for lead screening.

If your child has not had routine well-child visits (since the age of one year) and you are concerned about lead exposure to your child, contact the Herkimer County Public Health Department at (315) 867-1176 or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.

### **What Happened? What is Being Done?**

The Village of Herkimer Public Water System overall exceeded both the Lead and Copper Action Levels during the 2019 sampling period.

Herkimer is currently blending well water with its surface water to aid in corrosion control within the Village water system.

The Village of Herkimer started blending well water with surface water in 2008, and did not exceed the Lead or Copper action levels between December 2009 and September 2019. We will continue to sample and monitor results to optimize corrosion control.

To find out if you have a lead service line to your home, you can find where the water line enters the building, generally through the basement wall. Lead service lines are generally soft and a dull gray color. You can identify them by carefully scratching them with a key. If the pipe is made of lead, the area you scratched will turn a bright silver color. Do not use a knife or other sharp instrument and be careful not to puncture a hole in the pipe. NOTE: galvanized pipe can also be dull gray in color. A strong magnet will typically cling to galvanized pipes, but will not cling to lead pipes.

### **For More Information**

*Call us at (315) 866-3303. For more information on lead in drinking water, contact your local health department at (315) 866-6879, or the New York State Department of Health directly by calling the toll-free number (within New York State) 1-800-458-1158, extension 27650, or out of state at (518) 402-7650, or by email at [bpwsp@health.state.ny.us](mailto:bpwsp@health.state.ny.us). For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead), or call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD.*