



Lead and Drinking Water

Huntsville Utilities (H.U.) cares about the health of the families in our community and wants to let you know that we fully comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Lead and Copper Rule as directed by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM).

Lead does not come from the water treatment plant or water transmission mains; it comes from lead service lines running between the water main in the street and the home, and from plumbing inside the home. The use of lead and lead solder in plumbing was discontinued in 1986. However, some homes may still have lead connections or internal fixtures that contain lead. The best way to determine if you have lead pipes is to contact a plumber.

Protection from Lead

H.U. takes steps to control water chemistry by utilizing a safe to consume, corrosion control additive that coats the pipes and prevents lead from leaching into our drinking water. To date, H.U. has never had test results that call for additional action. Results of our testing are available in our annual Water Quality Report at <https://www.hsvutil.org/ac/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/HsvUtilWQR2016.pdf>.

ADEM requires that we test every 3 years for lead during the warm summer months in homes built from 1982 to 1989. These were the years when copper pipes were most likely soldered with lead. Participation in our testing has required customers to pull a sample from their tap during the collection period of June 1 to September 30. H.U. has provided these kits with a sample bottle and instructions that specify the sample be the first cold water drawn in the morning after sitting undisturbed for at least six hours. H.U. picks up the samples and sends them to a certified independent lab for testing. Results of testing are provided to the customers that participated. The number of participants is limited.

If you have lead pipes or want your water tested for lead, H.U. encourages you to have your water tested by a certified lab. The following link provides a list of in-state certified labs, <http://adem.alabama.gov/programs/water/waterforms/InStateChemicalLabs.pdf>. There is a fee for the testing.

Other Ways to Reduce Your Risk to Lead Exposure

Flush your cold water tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. Using cold water for cooking will also reduce the potential for lead exposure.

Purchase a point of use treatment device certified to remove lead and make sure the device is properly maintained based on manufacturer recommendations.

Avoid consuming water from the hot water tap where lead is more likely to be present. For more information on lead, the U.S. EPA has set up a Safe Drinking Water Hotline. The call is toll free at 1-800-426-4791. You may also visit their website at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

View the complete H.U. Lead and Copper Monitoring at <https://www.hsvutil.org/ac/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Huntsville-Utilities-Lead-Copper-Plan.pdf>.