

Question: I heard something about a Lead and Copper Program in the City of Topeka. What is this all about?

Answer: The Lead and Copper Program in the City of Topeka is in response to the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) published by the US EPA in 2021. A key requirement of this rule is for water systems to establish and maintain an inventory of service line materials by October 16, 2024. Additionally, in early December 2023 the US EPA proposed further changes to this rule through the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI). The City of Topeka is working to comply with the provisions of these rules, however, it is important to note that they are not yet finalized, meaning some or all of the deadlines we face may be subject to change.

Question: Do I have lead pipes? I didn't receive anything in the mail.

Answer: Only customers with an unknown material service line on their side should have received a survey. If you did not receive a survey, it means that we have records of what material the service line on your side of the meter is. If you want to perform the survey to determine the service line material entering your home, you can navigate to the website at www.Topeka.org, click on Lead and Copper Compliance and then on Topeka's LCRI Compliance that will bring you to a PDF of the survey. You can use this survey to identify the service line material entering your home.

Question: How do these rules affect the City of Topeka?

Answer: The City of Topeka is currently in compliance with the existing rule and is actively working with Black & Veatch to comply with the new rules. We are working to compile a comprehensive inventory of all service lines and their materials, both on the city side and the customer side, by the EPA's deadline of October 16, 2024. Upon completion, we anticipate the necessity of sending annual notifications to customers identified as being served by lead lines, galvanized lines downstream of lead lines, or lines of unknown material. Additionally, we will make this inventory accessible to the public via a designated website. We seek the assistance of our customers in identifying the materials of any unknown lines, underscoring the importance of community collaboration in this endeavor.

Question: How is the City creating this inventory?

Answer: The City has an extensive amount of documentation regarding the service lines within our jurisdiction, including records such as water service cards completed during water meter installations, documentation filled out by plumbers, contractors, and city personnel during maintenance work, projects, and instances of line breaks. We are consolidating all relevant documents to form a comprehensive inventory of our service lines.

Question: Does the City of Topeka water contain lead?

Answer: Water leaving the City of Topeka Water Treatment facility does not contain lead. However, it would be possible for lead to enter drinking water if the water came in contact with lead-containing plumbing materials, including service lines and fixtures.

Question: Does the City of Topeka test for lead?

Answer: The City of Topeka currently tests water for lead every three years, as is scheduled by KDHE. Our most recent testing year occurred in 2023. The City's testing showed lead levels below the current action level of 15 parts per billion and below the proposed action level of 10 parts per billion, at 2.4 PPB.

Question: How do I know if my home has a lead service line?

Answer: Water line materials can be determined in several ways, but the age of your home is important. Lead service line installations were prohibited by a rule which was enacted in 1986 and took effect in 1988. If your home was built after 1988 with a new service line, your line should not be lead. If your home was built prior to 1988, it may have lead service lines. Lead was popular in the 1960s.

Question: Does my home contain other lead components?

Answer: Plumbing components including brass and chrome plated faucets, lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, and other fixtures or equipment may contain lead.

Question: What do I do if my house has a lead service line?

Answer: If you have a lead service line, the City of Topeka suggests using a water filter certified to remove lead to enhance the safety of your drinking water. Furthermore, we advise using a certified water filter to remove lead when preparing baby formula or food.

The City of Topeka has corrosion control methods in place, which helps water meet all existing standards.

Question: What other things can I do if my house has a lead service line?

Answer: In addition to using a water filter certified to remove lead, the City of Topeka recommends that you avoid drinking stagnant water. Run your faucet for 3-4 minutes to draw in fresh water from your neighborhood's water main, allowing any water that may have been stagnant within fixtures, plumbing components, and pipes to flush out.

Question: If I have a lead pipe to my home, I want it changed now. What do I need to do?

Answer: You can choose to contract with a private plumbing contractor to replace your service line. You should choose a plumber familiar with the City codes and permits necessary to do so.

Question: What are the effects of lead?

Answer: Those most susceptible to the effects of lead are young children, infants, fetuses, and the elderly. Lead exposure in children and infants has been associated with behavioral and learning difficulties, decreased IQ, hyperactivity, and other health problems. In adults, lead can lead to organ damage and interfere with red blood cells that carry oxygen. According to the US EPA, there is no safe level of lead exposure.

Question: Can I get my water tested for lead?

Answer: The City of Topeka encourages anyone worried about lead in their drinking water to arrange for testing through a laboratory. Currently, the City is not conducting tests for individual homes or buildings. Laboratories that you can contact about testing drinking water samples for lead located in Kansas include Pace Analytical, in Salina, at 785-827-1273, and SDK Laboratories in Hutchinson at 620-665-5661.

Question: How can I determine if I have a lead service line on the customer side of my property?

Answer: The City of Topeka plans to distribute surveys, flyers, media announcements and/or door hangers to City consumers in 2024 for locations where line material information is lacking. These surveys will provide instructions on locating service line, examining its material, capturing a photo to submit to the City, completing a brief questionnaire, and ultimately identifying your probable line material. More details on this initiative will be communicated in the coming months.

Question: Where can I get more information about lead?

Answer: You can find additional information about lead and ways to reduce your risk of exposure at the US EPA web site <https://www.epa.gov/lead> or at the Kansas Department of Health & Environment website at <https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/547/Lead-Copper-Rule>.

Question: I've heard from my child's school or daycare that there will be lead testing there. What can you tell me about that? Is this related?

Answer: Certain aspects of the proposed rules pertain to offering lead-related education in schools and daycare facilities, as well as testing. For further clarification and details, it's best to reach out directly to

your child's school or daycare. They will be able to provide you with more information specific to their procedures and any relevant rules.

Question: I've heard from my friends or read online that all the lead service lines will have to be replaced. Is that true and who is going to pay for that?

Answer: Certain sections of the proposed LCRI include mandates to replace lead service lines by specific deadlines. The City of Topeka is will comply with all components of the requirements once they are finalized by the US EPA and the KDHE. The City is actively exploring potential funding options to fulfill these obligations, particularly those related to the replacement of lead service lines.

QUESTION: Is this related to the recent Boil Water Advisory?

Answer: No, this is not related to the BWA. This is related to a set of rules proposed by the USEPA for all public water utilities in the United States.