

# Lead and Copper Testing

**Lead** is not typically detected at the drinking water source. Lead and copper primarily enter drinking water as a result of the corrosion of plumbing materials containing these metals. In the EMWD service area, these plumbing materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipes and/or brass and chrome-plated brass fixtures in the home. When water stands in plumbing system pipes containing lead and/or copper for several hours or more, these metals may dissolve in your drinking water.

The samples we are requesting will be the first water drawn from the tap after at least six hours of



standing in your pipes to represent the worst case scenario.

**Copper** is needed for normal body function, but excess copper in the body may cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea and comes from leaching of your household pipes . When copper levels are reduced the body recovers.

## Health Effects of Lead

Lead is found throughout the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, certain types of pottery porcelain and pewter, and water. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body.

Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children and pregnant women. (Amounts of lead that won't hurt adults can slow down normal mental and physical development of growing bodies.)

## If Lead is Found in Your Drinking Water, These are Steps You Can Take to Reduce Exposure

1. **FLUSH YOUR SYSTEM.** Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking for 15-30 seconds.
2. **USE ONLY COLD WATER FOR COOKING AND DRINKING.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Hot water can dissolve more lead more quickly than cold water.
3. **USE BOTTLED WATER.** If you are still concerned about lead and copper after following the steps above.

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