

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON LEAD CONTENT IN WATER

1. How many water customers does Grayslake serve?

The Grayslake water system provides water to 6,911 residential and business locations.

2. What are the health effects of lead?

Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with privately owned service lines and home plumbing. Over the last 100 years a variety of materials were used in plumbing components. Elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially in pregnant women and young children.

3. How is this water provided?

The Village operates a publically owned system of water lines that deliver water to privately owned water services that connect to the public water lines and run from the connection to the home or business being served.

4. Does the Village have public water pipes made of lead?

No.

5. Does Grayslake test the water it delivers to its customers and if yes what has been the test results?

The Village periodically tests the water it delivers to private home/business water services in accordance with Illinois Environmental Agency regulations. Although not required, the Village does test the water it delivers to private water services for lead levels. These tests confirmed that the water the Village is delivering to its customers has no lead content regulatory issues. For this reason it can be said that the question of higher lead levels in water centers on those customers who own, or are more likely to own, water services or plumbing fixtures made of lead.

6. How many water customers have lead services or lead plumbing fixtures?

Grayslake was incorporated in 1895. There are few verified records of water service or fixture types for many structures in the community. Therefore there is no absolute way to know which structures have lead services or plumbing fixtures. However the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) has approved a list of 62 specific Grayslake locations with lead services. A list of those locations can be accessed here www.villageofgrayslake.com.

The age of structures is one way to estimate the likelihood of the structure having lead water services or plumbing fixtures. Generally homes built after 1970 did not use lead materials for water services or in plumbing fixtures. Contractors who have been active in Grayslake over many years report that the use of lead water service pipes ended in Grayslake much earlier due to the use of galvanized steel pipe materials around 1950.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON LEAD CONTENT IN WATER

Using this information the Village's Building and Public Works Departments have developed a list of addresses that are more likely to have lead services or fixtures based on their age. A list of these addresses can be found here www.villageofgrayslake.com.

These two lists total 368 or 5.3% of all water service customers served by the Grayslake water system. This list may change as new information becomes available.

Please note that this is not a confirmed list of locations. Some on the list may not have lead services or fixtures and locations not on the list may still have lead services or plumbing fixtures.

7. What about schools or other public buildings?

Just like homes and businesses, schools and other public buildings have water services that run from the public water system to each building. Generally, the older the building the more likely the building receives water from the public watermain through a water service made of lead.

8. Without a clear record how can I find out about my situation?

Based on our limited records and contractor anecdotal information homes built after 1985 will not have lead issues. Homes after 1970 are also less likely. This may be the case further back as well. Generally, the older your home is the more likely you may have a lead service or lead in your plumbing fixture. If you want to know for sure having a plumber inspect your piping is a way to determine your specific situation.

9. How can I determine if I have a lead service or plumbing fixture?

You can contact any reputable plumber who can inspect the piping near your water meter and your plumbing fixtures to determine the type of materials used.

10. Are homeowners who have lead services required to test their water?

At this time the IEPA does not require private citizens or businesses to test their water.

11. If I may have a lead service or plumbing fixtures what next steps are suggested?

Testing your water for lead levels is a suggested step. Any licensed testing laboratory can test your water. The IEPA has a list of laboratories that can be found here: <http://www.epa.illinois.gov/topics/certification-training/lab-accreditation/index>

12. If I have test results in my home or business that show higher lead levels what can I do to reduce the lead levels in my home/business?

The best way to reduce lead levels in your home is to replace your lead water service or plumbing fixtures. This can take time and be expensive. There are short term ways to reduce lead levels in your home or business including flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using the water for drinking or cooking.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON LEAD CONTENT IN WATER

For more information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure, contact the safe drinking water hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or go to www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

13. It sounds like the issues relate to some private water services and not the overall system. Am I correct on this?

Yes. In Grayslake the water delivered to private water service does not cause high lead levels. Private home water services and plumbing fixtures in up to an estimated 6% of water customers may contain lead materials. 94% of customers are not likely to have high lead levels.

14. When I read about lead in water the information often says the water system does not meet standards. This is confusing?

Lead levels in water can be caused by issues with both the publically owned portions of water systems and privately owned lead services or plumbing fixtures. Often the typical coverage of these issues does not make a distinction between problems from the public system versus the privately owned water services. This can cause confusion when people think from the coverage of “water systems” that the water delivered to all customers has high lead content even when most customers are not at risk.

15. Based on these estimates it seems most homeowners and businesses are not at risk. Is this correct?

Yes. In Grayslake most homes and businesses were built after 1985 when lead was not used in water services or plumbing fixtures.

16. Because Grayslake has some privately owned lead water services is Grayslake required to do special testing?

Yes. Even though an estimated 94% of Grayslake water customers are not at risk, water rates must pay for special testing at some homes and businesses that have lead services.

17. What is the testing procedure?

Once the IEPA selects 30 locations for testing (0.43% of all customers), the Public Works Department starts the testing process by contacting those water customers. The testing process requires collection of water samples within the homes or businesses. These samples are then sent to a private lab for testing.

18. Has this testing in Grayslake shown lead levels in those homes higher than IEPA rules?

Yes. The number of customers over the IEPA rules has ranged from 0 to 3 customers from the 30 homes tested. If just 4 or more of the test locations with lead services (0.578% of all customers) are above the IEPA lead levels Grayslake is deemed out of compliance. This happened last in 1996.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON LEAD CONTENT IN WATER

19. What happens if 4 or more of the 30 testing locations have higher lead content than IEPA rules?

When this small number of our customers test higher than IEPA rules, the Village must also send two notices to all 6,911 customers even though most customers are at no risk. This can cause alarm but is the IEPA requirement.

Grayslake sends information on the test results to all the customers who were tested. This provides appropriate information to a set of customers with a greater chance of high lead levels in their water due to the presence of lead water services or fixtures.

20. Does the Village have programs to help residents replace their lead water services?

It is anticipated that starting in 2017, the Village will offer financial assistance to encourage homeowners to replace their private water services. Details will be announced in late 2016.