

A HISTORY OF LEAD IN DRINKING WATER



1918
Denver Water Established

Pre-1951
Lead as Industry Standard
Lead is used to make customer-owned service lines that carry drinking water from main pipelines into homes and businesses.

1951
Denver Water Changes Standards
Denver Water allows use of galvanized steel and copper pipes instead of lead for customer-owned service lines.

1977
Lead Banned from Paint
The Consumer Product Safety Commission bans lead from the consumer paint market to take effect in 1978.

1971
Denver Water Bans Use of Lead in Service Lines
Fifteen years before a national ban would be enacted, Denver Water bans use of lead in customer-owned service lines.

1991
Lead Removed from Gasoline
Amendments to Clean Air Act require lead be removed from gasoline by 1995.

1986
Lead Pipes Banned
Congress approves amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, banning lead pipes and phasing out lead solder.

1991-1992
Lead and Copper Rule Established, Denver Water Enhances Water Quality Testing
EPA's 1991 Lead and Copper Rule establishes water quality testing requirements and action levels for corrosion control. In 1992 Denver Water begins testing water from homes with known lead service lines.

1994
Denver Water Identifies pH Adjustments to Reduce Corrosion
Denver Water begins using pH adjustments to reduce likelihood of lead getting into water from customer-owned lead piping.



2011
Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act Passes
Congress passes Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act, lowering the amount of lead allowed in "lead-free" household faucets and parts.

2012
Denver Water Sampling Exceeds Action Level
Denver Water's lead monitoring of homes with lead service lines shows results exceeding EPA's action level by 2 parts per billion (ppb).

2016
Denver Water Launches Lead Reduction Program
Denver Water launches ongoing program to continue education and reduce lead in drinking water, including replacing lead service lines during construction, offering free lead testing, community meetings, school-based outreach, collaboration with community partners and more.

2012-2017
Denver Water Conducts Public Education Campaign and Study
Denver Water launches extensive public education campaign and begins detailed study and analysis of optimal corrosion control methods to enhance protection for customers with lead service lines and plumbing.



2018-2019
Denver Water Seeks Variance to Orthophosphate
Denver Water studies impact of orthophosphate as well as elements of an alternative solution by requesting a variance that includes an accelerated lead service line replacement program, filter program and increasing pH for corrosion control, with final proposal submitted August 2019.

2018 (March)
CDPHE Designates Orthophosphate
In response to 2012 sampling, CDPHE designates use of additive orthophosphate to reduce risk of lead in drinking water.

2019 (Dec. 16, 2019)
EPA Approves Variance
Denver Water receives approval to commence Lead Reduction Program beginning in 2020.



2020
Denver Water Launches New Lead Reduction Program
Denver Water launches program, sends out 106,000 pitchers and filters, replaces over 4500 lead service lines and increases pH.

2020
Lead and Copper Rule Revisions
EPA approves revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule.

LEARN MORE:
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