Important Information about Lead in Your Drinking Water *The Town of Sheridan found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women, nursing women, and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water*

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and The Town of Sheridan are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Some drinking water samples taken from this facility have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/L). Under Federal law, we are required to have a plan in place to minimize lead in your drinking water by Dec 31, 2016.

This plan includes:

1. Corrosion control treatment (treating the water to make it less likely that lead will dissolve into the water);

2. Source water treatment (removing any lead that is in the water at the time it leaves our treatment facility); and

3. A public education program.

If you have any questions about how we are carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation, please give us a call at 406-842-5431.

This brochure also explains the simple steps you can take to protect yourself by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

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 cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body.

The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

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. In addition, a child at play often comes into contact with sources of lead contamination - like dirt and dust - that rarely affect an adult. It is important to wash children's hands and toys often, and to try to make sure they only put food in their mouths.

LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of infants who drink baby formulas and concentrated juices that are mixed with water. EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20% or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

HOW LEAD ENTERS OUR WATER

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome-plated brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect houses and buildings to water mains (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials to 8.0%.

When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon if the water has not been used all day, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN YOUR WATER

1. Run your water to flush out lead. Run water for 15-30 seconds to flush lead from interior plumbing or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking, if it hasn't been used for several hours. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of the plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your health. It usually uses less than one or two gallons of water.

2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily into hot water.

Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.

3. Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water will not reduce lead, lead dissolves more easily into hot water.

4. Look for alternative sources or treatment of water. You may want to consider purchasing a water filter or bottled water. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or **www.nsf.org** for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality.

5. Get your child's blood tested. Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead, if you are concerned about exposure.

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT IS BEING DONE?

1. Levels of lead in the Sheridan public water supply was discovered during routine sampling of the system during the DEQ prescribed sampling period of January 1 to June 30, 2016. Results of the twenty-nine samples taken during this period identified an exceedance of the lead action level of 0.015 micrograms per liter (15 parts per billion). Due to the action level exceedance, DEQ has mandated an action plan that will identify the source(s) of the lead and identify the necessary steps to mitigate the exceedance. The Sheridan Town Council has initiated the required actions.

2. The Town of Sheridan has some lead pipes still in use. The DEQ study/evaluation will determine the plan for mitigation moving forward. We have no exceedance of lead prior to this report.

3. There has been a recent spike in lead levels within our system. The reason for this spike will be determined by this study.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call us at 406-842-5431

You can also consult a variety of sources for additional information. Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/lead.

State and local government agencies that can be contacted include: **Department of Environmental Quality** at **406-444-4400** can provide you with information about your facility's water supply; and **Department of Public Health and Human Services** at **406-444-0273** or the Madison County Public Health Department at 406-843-4295 can provide you with information about the health effects of lead.

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Lead in Drinking Water

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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