

MOUNT LAUREL TOWNSHIP
Municipal Utilities Authority

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Dear Valued Customer:

The quality of water supplied by the Mount Laurel Township Municipal Utility Authority's (MLTMUA's) water system continues to meet all State and Federal Water Quality Standards. We strive to continually meet those standards and currently need your assistance in performing some of the required sampling.

On a regular basis, all water systems, including the MLTMUA are required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), to measure lead and copper levels in drinking water. You have been selected to participate in our area wide sampling program to test for the presence of lead and copper in our drinking water. Since lead and copper primarily enters drinking water systems through corrosion of household plumbing materials, sampling must be taken at the tap.

If you would like to volunteer to participate in this testing, please contact our office at (856) 234-0062 and reference this letter. Our customer service representative will get your contact info and one of our water professionals will contact you to set up an appointment to check the plumbing in your home. If you are chosen to participate you will receive a letter to let you know when sample bottles will be delivered to your home by MLTMUA personnel and when the collected samples will be picked up. Detailed instructions regarding the sampling procedure will be provided when the sample bottles are delivered since you will be collecting the sample, eliminating the inconvenience of MLTMUA personnel entering your home. Once our lab analyzes your sample, the lead and copper results will be provided to you.

The MLTMUA and the systems it purchases water from, effectively treat the water to reduce its corrosivity. Our lead and copper levels have consistently tested below the USEPA's maximum contaminant level and with your help, our results will continue to confirm that our water is among the best in the country.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and participation in our upcoming lead and copper study. We look forward to your call.

Charles Bernheimer
Operations Director &
Licensed Operator

Craig Levai
Water Treatment
Supervisor

Jeff Hammell
Water Distribution
Supervisor

Lead and Copper FAQ's

Q. Why is lead and copper testing done in Mount Laurel Municipal Utilities Authority (MLTMUA)?

A. Lead and copper testing is done to determine if water treatment techniques used by the MLTMUA are consistently effective in minimizing the corrosiveness of the water delivered to its customers, right up to the customer's faucet, in accordance with drinking water regulations. The treatment of water to minimize corrosion greatly reduces customers' exposure to unsafe levels of lead or copper. The regulations covering what is known as the Lead and Copper Rule were set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

Q. What is meant by the corrosiveness of the water?

A. Water, by its very nature is corrosive to most metals over time. Corrosive is just another term to describe the ability of water to dissolve lead or copper in a customer's plumbing into the drinking water. A water treatment facility can minimize water's corrosive tendencies by adjusting the pH (acidity) of the water, monitoring the amount of dissolved minerals in the water which may inhibit corrosion and lastly, by possibly adding other chemicals, such as phosphates, to protect the water pipes.

Q. Does my home contain lead and/or copper?

A. Copper piping is very common in homes built over the last 50 years. Copper piping was also connected using lead-tin solder (a soft metal that was melted, then cooled and solidified) and a lead-containing flux which aided in the connection or soldering process. In addition, in many plumbing fixtures such kitchen or bathroom faucets, lead was added to the metal brass to make it easier to manufacture the faucets. Today, lead has largely been banned from plumbing fixtures in the United States.

Q. Is there anything I can do to protect myself from high levels of lead or copper dissolved from my own plumbing?

A. Yes, the most effective way to reduce exposure to lead and copper from a home's plumbing is to always allow the water to run until the water is noticeably cooler than when the faucet was opened. This allows the amount of water sitting in the homes water line to be flushed away before water is used for consumption. This flushing has been consistently shown through testing to be very effective in reducing lead and copper exposure.

Q. How is the water in Mount Laurel tested for lead and copper?

A. The water is tested for lead and copper using the precise protocol outlined by the USEPA. This protocol is designed to testing for lead and copper under the worst conditions possible. For instance, lead and copper samples are collected from "first draw" samples, meaning the water has been in contact with a customer's plumbing for at least six hours without disruption and will be the first water drawn in the morning. Since water can dissolve metals into the water through a process known as leaching, drawing the first water from a faucet in the morning should provide the worst conditions possible for lead and copper leaching. Additionally, since water can become more corrosive the warmer it becomes, samples must be taken during the summer months. Lastly, since these metals can flake off and be caught in a faucet strainer, strainers are not removed before sampling.

Q. How many samples are tested for lead and copper in Mount Laurel?

A. Testing under the USEPA protocol requires a certain number of samples based upon the population being served by the Water Utility. In the case of MLTMUA, 30 samples are required to be analyzed each year during specific months of the year.

Q. Who collects the samples in Mount Laurel?

A. The customers of homes selected for testing collect the samples. Since it would not be practical for water utility sampling personnel to collect samples of the first water drawn very early in the morning in the customer's home, samples were collected by the customers themselves after receiving instructions from the MLTMUA.

Q. Who analyzes "first draw" lead and copper samples collected by the customers?

A. All the lead and copper samples analyzed for the MLTMUA were analyzed by laboratories selected by the USEPA.