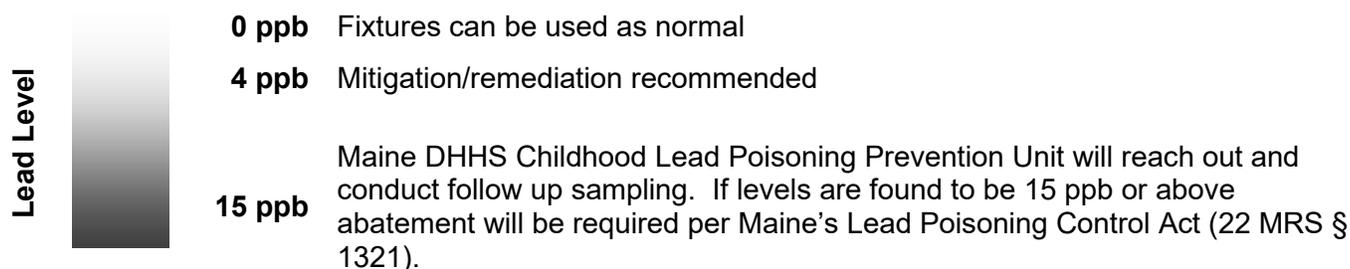


## Understanding Sampling Results

When you receive your water sample test results from the lab, they will report concentrations of lead in parts-per-billion (ppb). While there is no safe level of lead, lead levels over 4 ppb exceed the Maine guideline for lead and are recommended for mitigation/remediation. Lead levels 15 ppb or higher require further investigation and possible abatement under Maine's Lead Poisoning Control Act.



As you review your sample results, consider not only the lead levels, but also the vulnerability of the children and the likelihood of exposure. Remember, younger children are more vulnerable to lead and are more likely to be exposed by consuming water that goes into making formula and by drinking out of their water bottles. Also keep in mind that the longer water sits undisturbed within your plumbing (such as after the weekend), the higher the potential for lead to dissolve into the water.

The Drinking Water Program will conduct a follow-up survey to all the child care programs that sampled for lead to ask what, if any, remediation took place after the child care program learned of its results.

If you have questions about your lead results or want information about **additional free sampling that can be done to help locate the source of the lead**, contact the Drinking Water Program at 207-287-2070.

## Steps to Reduce the Risk of Lead Exposure in Drinking Water

The following steps can be used to reduce concentrations of lead in your drinking water.

If you perform mitigation measures to address a high lead result, it is always recommended that you sample after that change to confirm that your efforts have effectively reduced lead levels in your water. The Drinking Water Program will pay the cost of analysis of confirmation samples.

### 1. Only Use Cold Water for Drinking and Cooking

Never use hot water for drinking, cooking or preparing formula bottles for infants. Lead leaches more easily into hot water than into cold water. The water may also sit for long periods of time in contact with lead components in a hot water tank which can increase the lead levels.



## 2. Clean Your Aerators

The aerator is the wire mesh on the end of your faucet, it can trap lead particles that are released from the building's plumbing and then they can continue to leach lead in your drinking water. Remove and clean your aerators from your faucet on a routine basis to potentially lower lead levels in your drinking water.



## 3. Flush Your Fixtures Before Consumption

Since the time water is in contact with the buildings plumbing may increase the concentration of lead in water, flushing drinking water fixtures is recommended. Flushing may be a good option to reduce high lead levels if fixture/plumbing replacement or treatment is not an option. Water should be flushed after weekends, holidays, and vacations. A good rule of thumb for flushing fixtures is to flush for a minute or longer.



## 4. Replace Fixtures and/or Plumbing

Some fixtures and plumbing materials may contain lead. If you have high levels of lead in your drinking water, consider replacing fixtures and plumbing which may contain lead. Make sure the materials you replace them with are rated "lead-free" and flush the fixtures after any plumbing or fixture replacement to remove any particulate lead that may have been released in that process.

## 5. Sample for Lead Routinely

Although free sampling through the Drinking Water Program can only be used once, routinely testing your water for changing lead levels is recommended. A regular sampling program covering the most critical drinking water fixtures is recommended every 3-5 years since lead release in water is dynamic. In addition, work on the plumbing or drinking water fixtures may affect lead concentrations. Lead sampling is recommended after removing or replacing any piping or drinking water fixtures.

## 6. Install Treatment Devices

Some treatment devices can reduce or effectively remove all lead from your drinking water. However, treatment devices require routine maintenance and cartridge replacement to remain effective.



For more information, please visit the Maine CDC Drinking Water Program website at [www.medwp.com](http://www.medwp.com), or visit the Environmental Protection Agency's website at <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>.