What can I do about lead in my drinking water?

Be prepared to talk about the risks of lead in drinking water

- Water is the only lead exposure pathway intended for human consumption; water is necessary for survival.
- There is no safe level of lead exposure. Lead is a poison – a potent and irreversible neurotoxin.
- The time to address lead in water is when lead is detected in the environment, not when lead is detected in children. This is referred to as primary prevention.
- Lead in water sampling has a lot of variability. One low sample does not mean there is no lead in the water.
- Corrosion control reduces but does not prevent exposure to lead in water.
- Routine blood lead testing of toddlers is designed to detect exposure from lead paint and dust, not water.
- The populations most vulnerable to lead in water, pregnant women and formula fed infants, are not tested for lead exposure.
- Lead poisoning household investigations rarely include water sampling, although it is becoming more common.
- The homes with lead paint and lead dust are typically the homes that also have more lead in the plumbing.

Learn More:
- http://graham.umich.edu/project/revised-lead-and-copper-rule
- https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3313_3675_76638-490556--,00.html
- https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water

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Call your water utility and ask questions about your home:

1. Is my service line made of lead, copper, galvanized steel, or plastic? How do you know?
2. I would like to collect Lead and Copper Rule samples at my house. What do I need to do to participate?
3. How can I help you develop an accurate service line materials inventory?

Ask questions when your water utility or local decision makers hold open meetings:

1. How many lead service lines do we have in our community? What records and research do you have to support your estimates?
2. What are your plans for identifying unknown lead service lines?
3. How are you notifying customers if they have a lead service line?
4. What are your lead service line replacement plans?
5. How many partial lead service line replacements have you done in the past year? How did you notify those homes?
6. What do you do to inform customers about the risks of partial lead service line replacements? What do you do to avoid partial lead service line replacements?
7. How many Lead and Copper Rule samples have been collected at homes known to have a lead service line?
8. What is the range of lead levels that you have detected at homes where you’ve conducted sampling?
9. Do you resample the homes with the highest lead levels every compliance sampling period?
10. Have you ever collected sequential samples from lead service line homes? What were the results?
11. What are you doing to find homes for compliance sampling this year?
12. Do you collect water samples and check for lead service lines when you investigate homes where children with elevated blood lead levels live?
13. Do you provide water filters for families with elevated blood lead levels? At lead service line homes?

Replace lead service lines in Flint, Michigan.