Easy steps to reduce possible exposure to lead from household plumbing

Run your water to flush the lead out. If the water has not been used for several hours, run each tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes or until it becomes colder before drinking or cooking. This flushes water which may contain lead from the pipes.

Use cold, fresh 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.

Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water will not reduce lead.

Test your child for lead. Ask your physician or call the LeadLine to find out how to have your child tested for lead. A blood lead level test is the only way to know if your child is being exposed to lead.

Test your water for lead. Contact the LeadLine at www.leadline.org or 503-988-4000 to find out how to get a FREE lead-in-water test.

Consider using a filter. Check whether it reduces lead — not all filters do. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality. Contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters.

Regularly clean your faucet aerator. Particles containing lead from solder or household plumbing can become trapped in your faucet aerator. Regular cleaning every few months will remove these particles and reduce your exposure to lead.

Consider buying low-lead fixtures. As of January 2014, all pipes, fittings and fixtures are required to contain less than 0.25% lead. When buying new fixtures, consumers should seek out those with the lowest lead content.

Acting Public Health

Portland Water Bureau’s Lead Hazard Reduction Program is a comprehensive approach to reduce exposure to lead. Through this program the Portland Water Bureau provides:

- **Corrosion Control Treatment.** Reduces corrosion of plumbing by increasing the pH of the water. This adjustment has reduced lead in tap water up to 70 percent.

- **Water Testing.** Provides free lead in water testing, but targets testing the water in households at-risk from lead in water. These are homes built between 1970 and 1985 with pregnant women or children 6 or younger in the home.

- **Outreach and Testing.** Funds agencies and organizations that provide education, outreach, and testing on all sources of lead.

- **Lead Hazard Reduction.** Supports the Portland Lead Hazard Control Program to provide grants to reduce lead paint hazards in homes.

**The Improvements**

On March 1, 2017, Portland City Council authorized the Portland Water Bureau to begin a Corrosion Control Treatment Pilot. This is the first step to implementation of improved corrosion control treatment to further reduce levels of lead in drinking water. This decision was based on results from a corrosion control study to determine the main causes of lead in drinking water in our system. The results of this study found that additional treatment is the most effective of further reducing lead in water from home and building plumbing.

The Corrosion Control Treatment Pilot will evaluate the different treatment potentials for effectiveness at reducing lead as well as other potential impacts to water quality and operations. This information will then guide the planning and construction phases of the project.

The entire project is anticipated to take up to five years, with treatment in place by Spring 2022.