

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

## What Is Lead?

Lead is a naturally occurring metal that is all around us. It was used for many years in paints, plumbing, and other products found in and around homes. The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined that exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Fortunately, drinking water is not a common source of lead poisoning in Arizona. Visit Lead Safe Phoenix at Neighborhood Services Lead Safety ([phoenix.gov](http://phoenix.gov)) for more information.

## How Does Lead Get Into Tap Water?

According to the EPA, lead in drinking water is mainly due to the corrosion of service lines and household plumbing materials. Therefore, the EPA has established the Lead and Copper Rule under the Safe Drinking Water Act to protect public health by ensuring utilities have proper corrosion control.

## Does the City of Phoenix Have a Corrosion Control Plan?

Yes, the City of Phoenix finalized an extensive corrosion control study and used these results to develop a corrosion control plan for the water system. The City's corrosion control plan is approved by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department.

To prove the effectiveness of our corrosion control plan, the City monitors daily for designated water quality parameters at the entry points to the distribution system at the water treatment plants and in the distribution system during the triennial monitoring year.

## Does the City Sample Inside Customer's Homes?

The City is approved for reduced monitoring by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) for Lead and Copper. The City monitors at customer's homes once every three years to determine the 90th percentile for Lead and Copper.

Tap water monitoring for lead and copper is used to assess the effectiveness of corrosion control treatment. Per EPA regulations, 90 percent of taps tested from inside consumers' homes must not exceed a lead concentration of 15 ppb.

## Results of Lead Sampling from Residential Water Taps

Action Level - 90% of taps tested must not exceed 15 ppb\*

Year*	Value	Number of sites above the Action Level
2021	4 ppb	Three (3) out of 71 taps sampled
2020	3 ppb	Two (2) out of 61 taps sampled
2018	3 ppb	Two (2) out of 54 taps sampled

\*90% of taps were less than or equal to this value

\*The State of Arizona allows the City to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.



## Does Phoenix Have Lead Service Lines?

Phoenix has been supplying water to customers for more than 100 years. While records indicate that lead service lines did exist in Phoenix's water service territory, it was standard protocol to remove lead service lines any time they were encountered or discovered by Phoenix Water Services employees. The last documented lead service line replacements took place in the early 1990s. If the City were to come across any lead service lines during maintenance and repairs, our protocol still stands to replace them.

## Is My Tap Water Safe?

Phoenix water is clean, high quality, and safe to drink. Public health, economic development, and quality of life here in our desert city are contingent upon a reliable and safe tap water supply. More than five million tests and measurements are conducted each year to ensure high quality tap water in Phoenix. Our water is tested for more than 100 substances, and is monitored throughout the year to ensure that it meets the rigorous standards set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, and the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department.

Phoenix makes wise investments in the rehabilitation and replacement of aging water infrastructure in support of reliable water deliveries and public health. Phoenix Water is committed to ensuring clean, safe, dependable water supplies now and for generations to come.

## I Received a Letter Stating I Have a Lead, Galvanized, or Unknown Service Line, What Now?

The last known documented lead services line replacements took place in the early 1990s and Phoenix actively continues to identify unknown service lines and replace any lead or galvanized lines identified during maintenance and repairs. Phoenix also has a Lead Service Line Replacement Plan in place to replace lead or galvanized service lines. Upon any disturbances or replacements of the service lines the City will provide customer notification and water pitchers and filters to customers.

## How Do I Know If My Home Is At Risk if I Have an Unknown Service Line?

In 1986, Congress enacted the "lead ban," which stated that public water systems, along with drinking water plumbing connected to a public system, must use "lead-free materials." As a result, homes built after the ban took place are less likely to have lead solder. The last documented lead service line replacements took place in the early 1990s. If the City were to come across any lead service lines during maintenance and repairs, our protocol still stands to replace them.

Additionally, Phoenix has conducted an extensive service line identification program and inventory of non-lead, lead, galvanized, and unknown services lines per EPA regulations. This inventory is available at [120water.com](http://120water.com).

## What Steps Can I Take to Reduce the Risk of Lead Exposure?

In addition to using a water filter certified to reduce lead by the American National Standards Institute, Phoenix recommends you flush the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably cooler before using it for drinking or cooking anytime the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six (6) hours. Phoenix encourages the reuse of this water by capturing it to reuse for gardening or car washing and encourages customers to take the Save Water Pledge. Visit Water Services The Phoenix Mayor's Save Water Pledge to learn more:

<https://www.phoenix.gov/waterservices/savewaterpledge>

## Can I Shower and Wash Dishes?

Yes. In the large majority of the population, bathing and showering is safe for adults and children as human skin does not absorb lead in water. Lead in water will not be absorbed by porcelain, metal, plastic or glass dishware.

## How Do I Test My Water For Lead?

Customers can contact the Arizona Department of Health Services for a list of laboratories certified to perform lead testing at [www.azdhs.gov](http://www.azdhs.gov).

## Where Can I Get More Information About My Drinking Water?

Read Phoenix Water's annual water quality reports, which describe the overall quality of water from its raw collection and storage to the treated purity at your tap.

