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# Advice for using water from lead pipes, plumbing

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Below are some tips regarding lead in water, from the [Massachusetts Water Resources Authority](#), the state [Department of Environmental Protection](#), and the [Boston Water and Sewer Commission](#).

**If you are unsure if there is lead in your water:**

- Get your home's water tested at a lab that is certified by the state's Department of Environmental Protection.

- Ask your local water department if there are lead service lines leading to your home. Boston residents can look up known addresses connected to lead service pipes on [this online map](#) managed by the city's Water and Sewer Commission.

**If you use water that runs through lead plumbing or is known to have elevated lead levels:**

- Replace pipes that have lead. This can be a costly option, though programs are available in some communities that offer financial incentives and assistance for such undertakings.
- Replace plumbing fixtures that may contain lead with new ones that have zero- or low-lead levels.



- Run faucets on cold for 15 to 30 seconds, particularly if no water has been used from that faucet for several hours, to allow pipes to flush water out that may have been standing and is more likely to carry lead.
- Because hot water dissolves metals faster, avoid running hot water if you plan to use it to drink, cook, make coffee, or otherwise to consume it. If you need hot water, draw it cold from the tap and heat it on the stove.

- Have an electrician check your wiring. Corrosion within your plumbing may be greater when grounding wires from your home's electrical system are attached.

- Remove loose solder and debris from plumbing materials in newly-built homes or in ones in which the plumbing has recently been replaced. To do this, remove faucet strainers from all taps and run the water for 3 to 5 minutes.

Thereafter, periodically remove the strainers and flush out any debris that has accumulated over time.

- Use bottled water. However, officials warn that this option can be significantly more expensive than using tap water.

- Buy home treatment devices — such as filters, reverse osmosis units, and distillers — that have been independently verified as being able to reduce lead. The [National Sanitation Foundation](#) has more details on this option.

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