

Your Drinking Water and Lead

There has been a lot in the news about lead in some communities' tap water. We want to ensure you that the City of East Moline shares these same concerns and is committed to providing our customers with a safe and abundant supply of water.

The City of East Moline is in compliance with all US EPA and Illinois EPA requirements pertaining to lead testing and lead levels in your drinking water.

Please refer to East Moline's most recent Water Quality Report posted on East Moline's website. It contains test results from our most recent lead tests, as well as results of many other water quality tests performed on our drinking water.

How is our water treated?

East Moline obtains raw water from the Mississippi River. As raw water enters an intake pipe, it is screened to remove any large debris and/or aquatic life. Activated carbon is also added at this point to assist in removal of organic material that can cause taste and odor issues. Water is transported from the river intake through two 20" raw water pipes to the East Moline Water Treatment Plant where aluminum sulfate is mixed with the raw water.

Once the water and the aluminum sulfate is mixed thoroughly, this solution enters large pools inside the plant called flocculation mixers. The flocculation mixers slow down the velocity of the water so that the aluminum sulfate can stick to the impurities in the water to create larger, heavier particles. These larger, heavier particles will completely settle out in the next phase, called sedimentation, which is when the velocity of the water slows down even more so that particles can settle out of the water.

After the sedimentation process, water is pumped through two sets of media filters to remove smaller particles. While it is being transported to the filters, a small dose of chlorine is added to disinfect the water and filters.

Once through the media in the filters, the water is treated with Ultra Violet (UV) light which controls the growth of cysts. Cysts are microscopic parasites such as Cryptosporidium and Giardia lamblia.

Immediately after UV treatment, chlorine and ammonia (chloramines) are added to the water to maintain a residual disinfection in the water distribution system.

Fluoride is also added at this same point to assist the public with dental hygiene. Fluoride addition is required by the Illinois Department of Public Health and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

The last phase of treatment before leaving the water plant and entering the distribution system is pH adjustment. This is done to ensure the water sent to your home is not corrosive. By adjusting the pH so the water is non-corrosive, it protects the pipes in the water distribution

system from deterioration due to corrosion of the inside of the pipes. A non-corrosive pH also protects your water service pipes and plumbing within your home from corrosion.

During each and every process there is continuous monitoring of water flow and chemical feed rates, and our laboratory regularly analyzes samples to ensure the water is treated properly.

So what about lead? Lead is a heavy metal, and does not naturally occur in river water. All pipes, tanks and equipment throughout the treatment processes within the water plant are lead free, therefore the treated drinking water leaving the water treatment plant is lead free.

Drinking water enters the city-wide water distribution system composed of pipes varying from 4” to 24” in diameter and made of cast iron, ductile iron, and polyvinyl chloride (PVC). None of the City owned pipes contain lead.

So you may ask how does lead get into the drinking water?

Some of the water service pipes that connect your home to the City’s water main and/or the plumbing in your home may be made of lead or contain lead. When corrosive water remains dormant in these pipes for an extended time (6 hours or more), lead can slowly “leach” (absorb) into the water.

The water service line and the plumbing inside your home is owned and is the responsibility of the property owner.

Remember, the City of East Moline treats and distributes drinking water using a process that is NOT corrosive.

How do I determine if I have a lead water service line?

Locate where your water service enters your home or building. It should be in very close proximity to your water meter. Gently scratch the pipe where it enters your home with a coin, knife, or metal object and check the color. If it’s dull looking like a nickel, the pipe is made of lead or galvanized steel. If the pipe is shiny like a penny, the pipe is copper. If the pipe appears to be plastic, it is PVC.

If you are unable to determine what type of water pipe is coming into your home, and would like someone to help you determine what type the pipe is, contact a licensed plumber to have it inspected. The City of East Moline will not identify what type of pipe you have, but the Inspection Department has a list of licensed plumbers you can contact.

I have a lead service line; how can I reduce my risk?

To help reduce the risk of lead in your drinking water if the water has been dormant for an extended period of time, simply flush the cold water faucet for 1 to 2 minutes, and this will pull

fresh water into your residential plumbing. To avoid any waste, you can bottle and use this water from flushing your lines to water plants or for household cleaning.

Always use cold water for any type of cooking. Hot water causes lead to leach out of your plumbing faster.

What do I do if I want to have my water tested for lead?

If you would like to have your water tested for lead, please contact the laboratory of your choice for instructions, sampling requirements, and cost. The local laboratories that we are aware of that can provide this service are listed below:

(NOTE: The City of East Moline does not endorse any particular vendor, organization, or agency. All information is provided as courtesy to our customers.)

QC Analytical Services, LLC
1798 Iowa Drive
LeClaire, Iowa 52753

Phone 563-289-3373

<http://www.qcanalytical.net/>

QC Environmental
17048 215th Street
Davenport, IA 52806

Phone: (563) 386-7827

<http://www.qcenvironmental.com/>

If you would like more information regarding lead risks, more information can be found on the following websites:

Illinois Department of Public Health
<http://dph.illinois.gov/>

Center for Disease Control
<http://www.cdc.gov/>

The National Lead Information Center

<https://www.epa.gov/lead/forms/lead-hotline-national-lead-information-center>