

LEAD & COPPER

One topic that has been prevalent since my starting at Pennichuck has been the Lead and Copper Rule. Before I worked here it wasn't something I heard about or investigated, but in my time here, I have learned a lot about it and its significance. So, what is the lead and copper rule? The Lead and Copper Rule was established in 1991 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water.

Why is lead in water a big deal?

When people are exposed to lead over time through drinking water, or even in the air, it can cause negative impacts on their cognitive abilities, speech and language development, hearing, visual-spatial skills, attention, emotional regulation, and motor skills ([Lead in Drinking Water](#)). The presence of lead in water comes from lead plumbing in homes and not the water supply itself. Since lead is tasteless, odorless, and colorless in drinking water, testing the water is the only way to detect the presence of lead.

If lead is so bad for people, why was it used in the first place?

At the time, lead service lines were used in the late 1800s through the 1940s, people were unaware of the negative impacts it could have on a person's health. It was not until the 1940s that medical professionals began to recognize the threat of lead exposure to people in their communities.

What can we do about it?

Pennichuck has done its part to ensure that all our piping is not made with lead material and has never been used according to company records dating back from 1852. However, we need our customers to be aware of lead piping in their homes that could contaminate their water supply. There are two ways to test for lead, the first is to test to see if your service line is lead by doing the scratch test ([How to do the Scratch Test for Lead](#)). The second, and only way to see if lead is in the water is to test the water. Pennichuck customers can request lead sample testing by filling out the [Lead and Copper Sampling Volunteer Form](#).

My experience with Lead and Copper.

In just my six months of being here, I have learned A LOT. There is so much complex information that goes into how water is treated, and why it's crucial to go above and beyond to follow rules and regulations. Especially with learning about the lead and copper rule which is not just about ensuring the water is safe to drink. It's about our customers and their family's health and ensuring we do everything we can to keep them safe and informed about the impacts of lead.

For more information on what Pennichuck is doing to implement the Lead and Copper Rule visit

<https://pennichuck.com/pennichuck-water-service-line-inventory-project/>.

