

# Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority

## Public Education for Lead – 2020 Update

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

The Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority is providing this public education for lead in response to lead and copper sampling in December 2019 for the period of July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. The Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority sampled 40 houses in December 2019 for lead and copper per South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's (SCDHEC) instructions. The Water Authority will continue sampling the lead and copper in the drinking water every 6 months until the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile value for lead is less than the action level of 0.015 mg/L.

The Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority found elevated levels of lead in 7 of the 40 houses sampled in the monitoring period. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead exposure.

#### **What Happened? What is Being Done?**

The Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority purchases their drinking water from the Belton-Honea Path Water Authority. The Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority does no further treatment of the drinking water once purchased from Belton-Honea Path Water Authority. The Water Authority is working with the Belton-Honea Path Water Authority to address the lead action level exceedance.

The lead action level was exceeded in the July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 monitoring period. The lead action level that requires public education and additional requirements is 15 parts per billion (ppb) or 0.015 milligrams per liter (mg/L). The 2019 level of lead found in the Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority water system in this monitoring period was 0.021 mg/L. The Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority was notified by SCDHEC of this exceedance. The Water Authority is taking actions which include this public information release to address this lead action level exceedance.

The Belton-Honea Path Water Authority began feeding an anti-corrosion chemical (orthophosphate) to the drinking water in early February 2019 under a pilot study approved by SCDHEC and has been feeding the chemical since that time. The Belton-Honea Path Water Authority also increased the pH of the drinking water in Mid-March 2019. The increase in the pH of the drinking water will make the water less corrosive to the household plumbing. The Belton-Honea Path Water Authority is continuing to monitor the level of the orthophosphate and the pH throughout the distribution system.

#### **Health Effects of Lead**

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientist have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

## Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the work place and exposure from certain hobbies (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes).

Drinking water is also possible source of lead exposure. Most sources of drinking water have no lead or very low levels of lead. Most lead gets into drinking water after the water leaves the local well or treatment plant and comes into contact with household plumbing materials containing lead. These include lead pipes and lead solder (commonly used until 1986), as well as faucets, valves, and other components made of brass. Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, include those advertised as "lead-free", may contribute lead to drinking water. EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water can receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

### Steps You Can Take to Reduce Your Exposure to Lead in Your Drinking Water

<u>Steps</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Run your water to flush out lead	The longer water resides in plumbing the more lead it may contain. If water hasn't been used for several hours, run it for at least 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking. Note: You may want to capture the initial running water for uses other than drinking or cooking, such as for watering the plants.
Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula	Lead dissolves more easily into hot water.
Do not boil water to remove lead	Boiling water will not reduce lead.
Look for alternative sources or treatment of water	You may want to consider purchasing a water filter or bottled water. Be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead. Contact NSF International at 1-800-NSF-8010 or <a href="http://www.nsf.org">www.nsf.org</a> for performance standards for water filters.
<u>Steps</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Test your water for lead	The City has included a list of SCDHEC certified commercial laboratories with this lead public notice. If you want to have your water tested, please contact one of these laboratories to make arrangements to have your water tested.
Get your child tested	Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead if you are concerned about exposure.
Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead and replace them if necessary	Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free", may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use fixtures, such as faucets, with wetted surfaces containing a maximum weighted average of 0.25% lead to be labeled as "lead-free". Note: Prior to January 4, 2014, fixtures could contain up to 8% lead and be labeled as "lead-free". Visit the NSF web site at <a href="http://www.nsf.org">www.nsf.org</a> to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

### For More Information

Call the Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority at (864) 379-2226 or visit our website at [www.donaldsduewest.myruralwater.com](http://www.donaldsduewest.myruralwater.com). For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead), call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791, or contact your health care provider.