

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 90th 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.

For More Information

Call the Donalds-Due West Water & Sewer Authority at (864) 379-2226 or visit our website at 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, call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791, or contact your health care provider.