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The Authoritative Resource on Safe Water®

Public Affairs Advisory

**TO: AWWA Leadership
All Utilities**

FROM: AWWA Public Affairs

DATE: February 3, 2010

Who:	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
What:	CDC memorandum on impact of partial lead service line replacement
When:	Notice posted on CDC site

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently posted a memorandum on its web site that may spur news coverage about lead in drinking water, particularly as it relates to lead service line replacement.

The memo describes the findings of an unpublished CDC epidemiological study suggesting a relationship between elevated blood lead levels in children and partial lead service line replacements.

Written by CDC's director of the National Center for Environmental Health, the memo explains that the study's "preliminary results suggest that when lead service lines are partially replaced, that is the public portion of the line from the main to the meter is replaced, children are more likely to have blood lead levels greater than or equal to 10 µg/dL, compared to children living in housing with either undisturbed lead service lines or service lines that are not made of lead."

The study is undergoing peer review, and publication in a scientific journal is anticipated. The memo advises information be provided to customers when lead service line replacement occurs, so that customers can take steps like flushing taps and cleaning aerators for an appropriate period of time after lead service line disruption.

The full CDC memo can be found here: <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/waterlines.htm>

Permanently reducing lead in drinking water fundamentally rests on removing lead materials from contact with drinking water, including lead service lines. Because customers are

frequently reluctant to replace the portion of the lead service lines under their control, utilities sometimes replace only the utility portion of the line.

Recent utility research suggests that disrupting lead service lines -- as occurs during lead service line replacement -- can substantially increase lead levels for a period of time. When lead pipe remains after the disruption, lead levels can continue to be elevated longer.

Utilities should also be aware of a recently published article in Environmental Health Perspectives titled, "Exposure on Tap: Drinking Water as an Overlooked Source of Lead."
<http://ehp03.niehs.nih.gov/article/fetchArticle.action?articleURI=info%3Adoi%2F10.1289%2Fehp.118-a68>

The article may prompt followup inquiries from local media.

Available resources:

There are several resources available to assist you in responding to inquiries and addressing the issue of lead in drinking water. Among them are:

Contribution of Service Line and Plumbing Fixtures to Lead and Copper Rule Compliance Issues [Project #3018] (free download)

A 2008 report funded by the Water Research Foundation that describes the contribution of service lines to household lead levels, the effects of disturbing service lines on lead levels in the home, and practices to reduce lead levels associated with lead service line replacement.

<http://www.waterresearchfoundation.org/research/TopicsAndProjects/projectSnapshot.aspx?pn=3018>

Strategies to Obtain Acceptance of Complete Lead Service Line Replacement (free download)

A 2006 guide prepared by AWWA on practical steps utilities can take to encourage customers to replace the portion of the lead service line under their control.

http://www.awwa.org/files/Advocacy/Govtaff/Documents/Lead_And_Copper_Strategies_For_Lines.pdf

Low-Lead Plumbing Products Guide

NSF has developed evaluation procedures to establish an American National Standard to determine product compliance with the $\leq 0.25\%$ percent maximum weighted average lead content requirement of the California Health and Safety Code as well as for other states developing similar regulations.

http://www.nsf.org/business/mechanical_plumbing/annexg.asp

AWWA has consumer-oriented information on lead in drinking water available on its DrinkTap.org consumer site.

<http://www.drinktap.org/consumerdnn/Home/WaterInformation/WaterQuality/LeadinWater/tabid/70/Default.aspx>

Further information on public policy related to lead in drinking water is available on AWWA's Government Affairs web page.

<http://www.awwa.org/Government/Content.cfm?ItemNumber=1321&navItemNumber=3843>