

## What is an exceedance ?

An exceedance is when the monitoring level(s) are above Federal Drinking Water Quality Standards for that contaminate. When a water system has an exceedance the system will issue a public notice (PN) explaining what the health risks are and how to reduce these risks.

*(See page 3 of this PDF to view PN)*

Following is list of Corrective Action statuses to help explain what ADEQ and/or water system are doing to resolve the issue.

| Corrective Action Status                                | Description  |
|---|--|
| <b>ADEQ Providing Compliance/Technical Assistance</b>   | ADEQ is assisting facility with the legal and/or technical requirements in order to be in compliance with state and federal regulations.   |
| <b>ADEQ/Facility Collecting Additional Samples</b>      | ADEQ or Facility are collecting additional samples to determine if the exceedance is a recurring event or a single event.  |
| <b>Facility Notified of Potential Deficiencies</b>      | ADEQ has informed facility that they have an exceedance of a permit limit or surface water standard (i.e. myDEQ Report and/or Phone call/email)  |
| <b>Facility Notified of Alleged Violations</b>          | Facility has received a Notice of Violation or Notice of Opportunity to Correct Deficiencies from ADEQ or delegated authority for exceeding a permit limit or surface water standard.                        |
| <b>ADEQ/Facility Agree Upon Path Forward</b>            | ADEQ and Facility have entered into a formal agreement which puts them on a path to return to compliance (i.e. Consent Order or Consent Judgment)  |
| <b>Facility Improvement in Process</b>                  | A structural, treatment, and/or operational improvement is currently being implemented at facility.  |
| <b>Compliance/Technical Assistance Was Unsuccessful</b> | Elevating the issue to ADEQ Leadership and the Water System, to seek additional Compliance/Technical Assistance with the goal help the water system return-to-compliance with state and federal regulations. |



# Drinking Water | Federal Water Standards Exceedance Report

Data Pull Date: 3/7/2019

## Facility: Southwestern Research Station

| County  | PWS #     | Name                          | Contaminant | Source             | Status                                      |
|---------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|---|
| COCHISE | AZ0402357 | SOUTHWESTERN RESEARCH STATION | LCR         | Exceeds Rule Limit | ADEQ/Facility Collecting Additional Samples |

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and Southwestern Research Station are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes in the community have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/L). If further testing indicates a corrosion issue, under Federal law we are required to have a program in place to minimize lead in your drinking water. That determination must be made by 03/30/2019.

This program includes:

1. Public education content
2. Corrosion control treatment (treating the water to make it less likely that lead will dissolve into the water)
3. Source water treatment (removing any lead that is in the water at the time it leaves our treatment facility)

This brochure also explains the simple steps you can take to protect yourself by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

### **Important Information about Lead in Your Drinking Water**

Southwestern Research Station found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some buildings. 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 in your drinking water.

## **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. Scientists 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. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and 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). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children's metal jewelry.

Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 0.25 percent wetted surface lead to be labeled as "lead-free."

**At the time of the lead testing on 09/20/2018, water for the system was being drawn from a spring. However, since then, the water source has been switched to a new state-approved well. Initial testing of the new**

**source water indicated a lead level below safety thresholds.** When water is in contact with pipes, and plumbing containing lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1988 are more likely to have lead pipes or lead solder.

Don't forget about other sources of lead such as lead paint, lead dust, and lead in soil. Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead.

## **STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN YOUR WATER**

1. Run your water to flush out lead

Run water from the cold water tap for 15-30 seconds to flush lead from interior plumbing or until it becomes cold and reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking, if it hasn't been used for several hours.

2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula

Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap. Also, do not boil water from the hot water tap, as hot water can dissolve lead more quickly than cold water. Rather, if you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and heat it on the stove. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.

3. Identify and replace plumbing fixtures containing lead

New brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 0.25

percent wetted surface lead to be labeled as “lead-free.”

4. Test your water for lead

Call us at **520-558-2396** to find out how to get your water tested for lead.

5. Get your child’s blood tested

Contact the state or local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead, if you are concerned about exposure.

6. Look for alternative sources or treatment of water

You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions to protect water quality.

### WHAT HAPPENED?

#### WHAT IS BEING DONE?

The Southwestern Research Station (SWRS) exceeded safe lead levels on 2 of 5 samples tested on 09/26/2018. This was shocking as SWRS has never had test results with high lead content since its inception in 1955. While our testing history would suggest this result was an anomaly, SWRS is committed to finding and eliminating the cause of high lead levels in its water. Further testing of water quality parameters, in accordance with ADEQ protocols, are being conducted to determine if there are contaminants present that may contribute to the excessive corrosion of plumbing materials. Additionally, SWRS is conducting non-mandated lead tests to determine whether this sampling event was an anomaly and to isolate any potential causes of high lead levels.

Until test results can be verified, there are no current actions being taken to reduce lead in the water. If high lead levels persist, SWRS will replace plumbing fixtures until the problem is resolved. It is our goal to have this resolved before opening March 1, 2019.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call us at 520-558-2396. For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA’s Web site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead), or contact your health care provider.

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# Lead in Drinking Water



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