

# CWS – General Public Education Notice

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

*Paul Smith's College found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this notice closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.*

This notice is brought to you by Paul Smith's College.

State Water System ID# NYS1612265

Date: January 10, 2025

### Health Effects of Lead

*Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.*

### Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The primary source of lead exposure for most children is lead-based paint. Other sources of lead exposure include lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics. Other sources include exposure in the workplace (jobs that include house painting, plumbing, renovation, construction, auto repair, welding, electronics repair, jewelry or pottery repair) and exposure from certain hobbies (such as stained glass or pottery, fishing, making or shooting firearms and collecting lead or pewter figurines), as lead can be carried on clothing and shoes. Children's hands or their toys can come into contact with lead in paint, dust, and soil. Therefore, washing children's hands and their toys will help reduce the potential for lead exposure from these sources.

Plumbing materials, including pipes, new brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows pipes, fittings, and fixtures with up to 0.25 percent weighted average of lead to be identified as "lead-free."

When water is in contact with pipes or plumbing that contains lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead. New homes may also have lead; even "lead-free" plumbing may contain some lead.

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

1. **Run your water to flush out lead.** Before drinking, flush your home's pipes for several minutes by running the tap, taking a shower, doing laundry, or doing a load of dishes. The

amount of time to run the water will depend on whether your home has a lead service line or not, and the length of the lead service line. Residents should contact their water utility for recommendations about flushing times in their community.

2. ***Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.*** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap, lead dissolves more easily in hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula.
3. ***Do not boil water to remove lead.*** Boiling water will not reduce lead.
4. ***Replace your plumbing fixtures if they are found to contain lead.*** Plumbing materials including brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as “lead-free,” may contribute lead to drinking water. The law previously allowed end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, with up to 8 percent lead to be labeled as “lead-free.” As of January 4, 2014, end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, fittings, and valves, must meet the new “lead-free” definition of having no more than 0.25 percent lead on a weighted average. Visit the NSF website at [http://www.nsf.org/newsroom\\_pdf/Lead\\_free\\_certification\\_marks.pdf](http://www.nsf.org/newsroom_pdf/Lead_free_certification_marks.pdf) to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures and how to identify lead-free certification marks on new fixtures.
5. ***Use bottled water or use a water filter.*** If your home is served by a lead service line, or if lead-containing plumbing materials are found to be in your home, you may consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF at 1-800-NSF-8010 (1-800-673-8010) or visit [https://info.nsf.org/Certified/dwtu/listings\\_leadreduction.asp](https://info.nsf.org/Certified/dwtu/listings_leadreduction.asp), for a consumer guide of approved water filters. In conjunction with flushing, properly operated filters are highly effective at reducing lead exposure. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions to protect water quality. Any measure you take to reduce your exposure to lead should be continued until the lead source(s) has been minimized or eliminated.

### **Should you test your water for lead?**

If lead-containing plumbing materials are identified in your home, Paul Smith’s College will continue to monitor your water system. Call us at 518-327-6438 to find out how to get your water tested for lead.

### **Should your child be tested for lead?**

New York Public Health Law requires primary health care providers to screen each child for blood lead levels at one and two years of age as part of routine well-child care. In addition, at each routine well-child visit, or at least annually if a child has not had routine well-child visits, primary health care providers assess each child who is at least six months of age, but under six years of age, for high lead exposure. Each child found to be at risk for high lead exposure is screened or referred for lead screening.

If your child has not had routine well-child visits (since the age of one year) and you are concerned about lead exposure to your child, contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.

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

The exceedance was discovered after the college received test results on 01/10/2025.

Paul Smith's College will continue working with the NYS Health Department to monitor locations with elevated lead levels.

Paul Smith's College will schedule the installation of filtered water systems in houses located on Faculty Hill.

### **For More Information**

*Call us at 518-327-6438 or) visit our website at [www.paulsmiths.edu](http://www.paulsmiths.edu). For more information on lead in drinking water, contact your local health department at NYS DOH Saranac Lake Office, 518-891-1800, [marlene.martin@health.ny.gov](mailto:marlene.martin@health.ny.gov) or the New York State Department of Health directly by calling the toll-free number (within New York State) 1-800-458-1158, extension 27650, or out of state at (518) 402-7650, or by email at [bpwsp@health.ny.gov](mailto:bpwsp@health.ny.gov). 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), or call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD.*