



Legislation Text

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170131 SUBSTITUTE 1

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Substitute resolution relating to Health Department recommendations for avoiding lead exposure. This resolution directs the Health Department to make recommendations for avoiding lead exposure from drinking water to families living in buildings with lead service lines, especially high-risk individuals (currently defined as women who are pregnant or breastfeeding and children under the age of six, particularly infants and children under the age of one). Recommendations shall include that drinking water should be passed through a filter certified to remove lead and that children under the age of six should be tested for lead. The Health Department shall also enhance outreach and awareness activities to high-risk populations.

The Health Department is directed to issue a media advisory to provide information to families living in buildings with lead services lines, especially high-risk individuals, regarding drinking water safety, the use of drinking water filters certified to remove lead, and lead testing recommendations, including recommendations that all drinking water should be passed through filters certified to remove lead, and that children under the age of six should be tested for lead. The Health Department shall update drinking water safety, lead awareness and lead poisoning prevention messaging to reflect these recommendations and shall enhance outreach to pregnancy and prenatal care providers and partners.

The Health Department shall issue written recommendations to Milwaukee-area obstetricians, pediatricians and public and private healthcare facilities and partner agencies, including any future updated recommendations as warranted.

The Health Department shall annually report to the Common Council a review of the latest research and recommendations relating to drinking water safety to avoid lead exposure, and shall continue to promote these recommendations until this resolution is rescinded or amended by future Common Council action.

Whereas, Lead exposure poses a significant threat to public health and safety, with infants and young children being at the greatest risk of adverse health impacts from lead exposure; and

Whereas, According to the Centers for Disease Control, there is no known identified safe blood lead level, and childhood lead exposure can cause damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, learning and behavior problems and hearing and speech problems; and

Whereas, While Milwaukee Water Works sources, treats and delivers drinking water throughout the city that is high-quality, safe, healthy and lead-free, lead service lines and plumbing can introduce lead into drinking water; and

Whereas, Approximately 74,600 properties in the city, including 68,300 residential properties comprising 54.2% of all residential properties in the city, receive water through City-owned lead service lines, and according to Milwaukee Water Works, a property with City-owned lead service lines is likely to also have privately-owned lead service lines; and

Whereas, Various initiatives are being planned or are in action to remove and replace City-owned lead service lines, to encourage property owners to remove and replace privately-owned lead service lines, plumbing and fixtures and to subsidize these costs, and to provide free or reduced-cost lead filters for the water taps of such households in the meantime; and

Whereas, Various public awareness efforts are in action to provide information to City residents relating to drinking water safety, and the Health Department currently recommends that Milwaukee households with pregnant women, breastfeeding women or children under the age of six, and where lead service lines are present, should have drinking water filters certified to remove lead installed on water taps; and

Whereas, High-risk individuals (currently defined as pregnant or breastfeeding women and children under the age of six), require access to accurate information about the presence of City- and privately-owned lead service lines, plumbing, fixtures and lead filters at all times and locations so they can make informed decisions about the risk of lead exposure from drinking water on a case-by-case basis; and

Whereas, The City of Milwaukee recognizes that all residents of the community need access to information on how best to protect themselves and their children from lead in drinking water; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, that the Health Department shall make recommendations for avoiding lead exposure from drinking water to families living in buildings with lead service lines, especially high-risk individuals (currently defined as women who are pregnant or breastfeeding and children under the age of six, particularly infants and children under the age of one), including recommendations that drinking water should be passed through filters certified to remove lead, and that children under the age of six should be tested for lead, and the Health Department shall enhance outreach and awareness activities to high-risk populations; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Health Department is directed to:

1. Issue a media advisory to provide information to families living in buildings with lead services lines, especially high-risk individuals, regarding drinking water safety, the use of drinking water filters certified to remove lead, and lead testing recommendations, including recommendations that all drinking water should be passed through filters certified to remove lead, and that children under the age of six should be tested for lead.
2. Update all Health Department drinking water safety, lead awareness and lead poisoning prevention messaging, which may include initiatives, websites, social media messaging, printed materials, outdoor and media advertisements and campaigns, including "Lead Safe Milwaukee", for families living in buildings with lead service lines, especially high-risk populations, to reflect recommendations regarding drinking water safety, the use of

drinking water filters certified to remove lead, and lead testing for children under the age of six. Any discussion of flushing household water to reduce the presence of lead shall be accompanied by a statement that the use of certified lead-removal filters is far superior to flushing practices. The Health Department currently recommends that Milwaukee households with women who are pregnant or breastfeeding or children under the age of six where lead service lines are present should have drinking water filters certified to remove lead installed on water taps.

3. Update all Health Department drinking water safety, lead awareness and lead poisoning prevention messaging to include outreach to pregnancy and prenatal care providers and partners. This may include relevant initiatives, websites, social media messaging, printed materials, outdoor and media advertisements and campaigns targeting families living in buildings with lead service lines, especially high-risk individuals.
4. Issue written recommendations to Milwaukee-area obstetricians, pediatricians and public and private healthcare facilities and partner agencies regarding drinking water safety, lead awareness and lead poisoning prevention for families living in buildings with lead service lines, including recommendations that all drinking water should be passed through filters certified to remove lead and that children under the age of six should be tested for lead. Updated recommendations shall be issued in the future as warranted.

Further Resolved, That the Health Department shall continue to promote these recommendations until this resolution is rescinded or amended by future Common Council action; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Health Department shall annually report to the Common Council a review of the latest research and recommendations relating to drinking water safety to avoid lead exposure.

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