



# PRICES FORK/MERRIMAC WATER CUSTOMERS RECEIVE LEAD NOTICE

*MontgomeryCountyVA.gov*

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*Montgomery County, Virginia* – The Public Service Authority (PSA) is notifying water customers in the Prices Fork/Merrimac area to take steps to reduce possible lead exposure in drinking water.

Routine monitoring of drinking water identified four homes that exceeded allowable lead levels set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). After receiving the results from four houses that exceeded the allowable lead levels, PSA officials met with the four homeowners and discussed the uncommonly high results and the possibility of lab errors or improper sample collection procedures. Each of the four homes were resampled and none of them exceeded the allowable lead levels after resampling. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnancy women and young children.

The Prices Fork/Merrimac waterworks purchases water from the Radford Army Ammunition Plant (RAAP), which did not detect lead during monitoring in 2011. The main sources of lead exposure in drinking water come from some plumbing materials. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have plumbing containing lead but even new homes with ‘lead-free’ plumbing may contain lead. New brass faucets, fittings and valves – including those advertised as ‘lead-free’ – may contribute to lead in drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures – such as faucets – with up to eight percent lead to be labeled lead-free. When water is in contact with pipes, service lines or plumbing that contains lead for several hours, the lead may enter drinking water.

Here are steps you can take to reduce exposure to lead in water:

1. Run water from the tap 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or a steady temperature before using for drinking or cooking.
2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. (Lead dissolves more easily in hot water).
3. Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling water **does not** remove lead.
4. Look for alternative sources or treatment of water. Contact the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) International at 800-NSF-8010 or [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) for more information.
5. Test your water for lead. For more details, call the PSA at (540) 381-1997.
6. Get your child tested for lead by a health provider if you are concerned about exposure.
7. Visit the NSF web site at [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) to learn more about lead containing plumbing fixtures.

The Prices Fork/Merrimac water system contains 645 homes. The PSA has 10 water systems and approximately 2,600 customers countywide. For more information, contact the PSA at (540) 381-1997, visit the EPA’s website at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead) or contact your health care provider.

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