

# water rings

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## NWWA Urges Customers to 'Get the Lead Out!'

There is nothing more important to us than providing our customers with safe, reliable, affordable water.

As part of this mission, we want to help keep your household safe from lead. While we treat and test water to make sure that it is lead-free when it leaves the treatment facility and travels through the water mains, some older homes in our community have lead in service lines, household plumbing materials and faucets.

Lead is a powerful toxin that is harmful to human health. Infants, young children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of lead because it accumulates in the body. There is no identified "safe" level of lead so, wherever possible, households should seek to reduce and eliminate exposure.

Lead can slowly dissolve into the water or break off in tiny particles. To protect our customers, NWWA monitors and adjusts the water's chemistry to prevent corrosion that may result in lead at the tap. We also sample water for lead at high-risk homes. If no part of

your service line or plumbing contains lead, your household is likely not at risk. However, the only way to be certain is to have your water tested by a certified laboratory and to inspect — with the help of a licensed plumber — your household plumbing for lead components.

If you do find that your household plumbing is contributing lead to your drinking water, there are several steps you should take to reduce exposure. For instance, if water has not been used for several hours, run the tap to ensure you are getting fresh water from the main. Use only cold water for drinking and cooking, and clean faucet aerators regularly to ensure they are free of lead particles. Finally, if your water has elevated levels of lead, consider purchasing a home filter certified to remove lead. Find out more on filter certification at [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org). Ultimately, the best way to protect your household is by removing all potential sources of lead.

Help us eliminate this threat to your drinking water. Together, let's get the lead out.

## But It's Just a Tiny Leak!

Sure, it looks like the tiniest of leaks - that teeny little drop coming out of your faucet. But those drips and drops can really add up over time.

We have a water conservation ruler that shows how a water stream as small as 1/32" could waste almost 6,200 gallons a month!

We all play a part in water conservation. Check your taps for leaks. If you'd like one of these rulers, send us a note at [wizard@nwwater.com](mailto:wizard@nwwater.com).

Visit our website for many more water-related conservation tips.

[www.nwwater.com/go/conserve](http://www.nwwater.com/go/conserve)



**Water costs money... don't waste it!**

A dripping faucet or fixture can waste 3 gallons a day... a total of 1000 gallons a year.

**Conserve Water and Save Money!**  
A reminder from your local water utility where we're dedicated to quality and service.

Visit our website at [www.nwwater.com](http://www.nwwater.com) for leak detection and water conservation tips.

Diameter of stream	Waste per quarter at 60 psi water pressure		
	Gallons	Cubic Feet	Cubic Meters
1/32"	666,000	89,031	2,521
1/16"	296,000	39,400	1,115
1/8"	74,000	9,850	280
1/4"	18,500	2,463	70

↑ A continuous leak from a hole this size would, over a three month period, waste water to the amount shown above.



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## This Issue

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**Spruce Up**

**Q & A - How Much Lead Is In Our Water?**



## Time To Tune Up Your Home's Irrigation System!

Homes with automatically-timed irrigation systems use about 50 percent more water outdoors than those without irrigation systems. Your system can waste even more if it's programmed incorrectly, a sprinkler head is pointed in the wrong direction, or you have a leak.

### Simple Tips for Sprucing Up Your Sprinkler

When it comes to a home's irrigation system, a little maintenance goes a long way. A home with an automatic irrigation system that isn't properly programmed or maintained can waste as much as 30,000 gallons of water annually. A broken or missing sprinkler head could waste as much as 25,000 gallons of water and more than \$90 over a six-month irrigation season.



Spruce up your irrigation system by remembering four simple steps—inspect, connect, direct, and select.

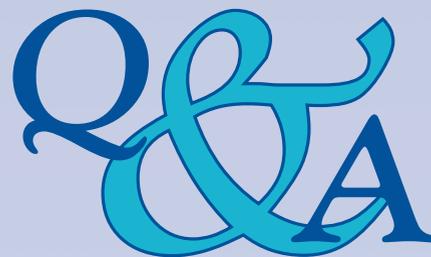
**Inspect.** Check your system for clogged, broken or missing sprinkler heads. If you're not the do-it-yourself type, go with a pro - look for an irrigation professional certified through a WaterSense labeled program.

**Connect.** Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes or hoses. If water pools in your landscape or you have large wet areas, you could have a leak in your system. A leak about as small as the tip of a ballpoint pen (or 1/32nd of an inch) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month.

**Direct.** Are you watering the driveway, house, or sidewalk instead of your yard? Redirect sprinklers to apply water only to the landscape.

**Select.** An improperly scheduled irrigation controller can waste water and money. Update your system's watering schedule with the seasons, or select a WaterSense labeled controller to take the guesswork out of scheduling.

You can save even more water outdoors by incorporating water-smart landscaping principles into your landscape design. And you can find more tips by visiting the WaterSense website at [www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor).



**Q:** With all the attention in the news concerning lead in drinking water, what are the lead levels in our water?

**A:** Lead is rarely found in the source waters of this area and has never been detected in the water supplies of the Authority. Lead enters tap water of our customers primarily as a result of corrosion of pipes, solder and other household plumbing components. Lead levels in tap water are generally not detected or at trace levels, with the highest levels occurring after prolonged periods of non-use and vary from home to home. The use of water softening equipment or the grounding of electrical components to water lines can also contribute to lead in tap water.

The Authority continually monitors water quality parameters of the drinking water throughout the distribution system to assure our customers that exposure to lead via the drinking water supply is minimized.

Exposure to lead has long been recognized as a cause of adverse health effects in humans. Lead is a highly toxic metal and elevated levels can interfere with the formulation of red blood cells, cause reduced birth weight or premature birth, delay physical and mental development in babies and young children and impair mental abilities in children in general. In adults, lead can increase blood pressure; interfere with hearing, cause anemia, kidney damage and mental retardation.

The established action level for lead in drinking water is 15 parts per billion. The US-EPA's goal is set at zero because of the lack of a clear threshold for other non-carcinogenic effects and the fact that lead blood levels in a large number of children exceed that known to cause adverse health effects. None of the homes monitored by the Authority for lead have ever exceeded this action level.

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