REDUCING YOUR POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO COPPER AT HOME

The most common source of copper in tap water is from the customer's plumbing and service line.

Providing safe, reliable water service is our top priority. We test and monitor for a wide range of contaminants, including copper.

While these tests indicate that copper is not an issue in the treated water leaving our facilities, copper levels might be detected at some properties due to copper or brass pipes and plumbing components. Water is more likely to contain high copper levels if the pipes in or leading to your home is made of copper or solder that contains copper.

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) copper standard is an action level that requires treatment review and modifications if copper test results exceed 1.3 parts per million (ppm) in more than 10 percent of first draw samples taken from household taps.

American Water operating utilities test for copper in accordance with regulatory requirements. Results of these tests are included in your annual Water Quality Report, which is available online (scan QR code below). In addition, we take steps to reduce the potential of copper leaching from service lines and household plumbing into the water. We do this by managing the pH levels in the water leaving our treatment facilities and adding a corrosion inhibitor where needed.

Prevent Corrosion: Have Your Electrical System Inspected
Some homes have electrical systems that are grounded or bonded through the water service line. This can accelerate corrosion due to stray electrical currents. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your system.

REDUCING YOUR POTENTIAL EXPOSURE

Here are steps you can take to reduce your potential exposure if copper exists in your home plumbing.

1. **Flush your taps.** The longer the water lies dormant in your home's plumbing, the more copper it might contain. If the water in your faucet has gone unused for more than 6 hours, flush the tap with cold water for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before drinking or using it to cook. To conserve water, catch the running water and use it to water your plants.
2. **Use cold water for drinking and cooking.** Hot water has the potential to contain more copper than cold water. If hot water is needed for cooking, heat cold water on the stove or in the microwave.
3. **Routinely remove and clean all faucet aerators.**
4. **Follow manufacturer's instructions for replacing water filters** in household appliances, such as refrigerators and ice makers, as well as home water treatment units and pitchers. Look for NSF 53 certified filters.
5. **Flush after plumbing changes.** Changes to your service line, meter or interior plumbing may result in sediment in your water supply. Remove the strainers from each faucet and run the water for 3 to 5 minutes.
6. **Follow the manufacturer's instructions on any in-home treatment devices**, including water softeners. Oversoftening water can disrupt the pH levels and alter the corrosion inhibitor effectiveness.

AMERICAN WATER

WE KEEP LIFE FLOWING®

HEALTH EFFECTS OF COPPER

According to the U.S. EPA, copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's disease should consult their personal doctor.

GETTING YOUR WATER TESTED FOR COPPER

American Water operating utilities do not provide testing for copper for individual customers who request it. Customers can choose to have their water tested at their cost at a certified laboratory.

LEARN MORE

Scan the QR code to view a copy of your annual water quality report.

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