Filter Installation and Maintenance

Did you know that even small amounts of lead in drinking water can have harmful health impacts?

The main way that lead gets into our drinking water is from lead pipes from public water systems and faucets. You can't smell, see, or taste lead in the water.

One relatively low-cost way to reduce lead in your drinking water is to buy and install a filter that removes lead.

Different filter brands may have varied instructions. It is best to follow the included instructions. Don't get overwhelmed! You can follow these easy steps below to properly install and use your water filter.

Steps to properly install and use your water filter

1. Make sure NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for lead reduction is on the label.
2. Remove the faucet screen or aerator.
3. If your faucet has threads on the outside, the filter should easily screw on to the threads. If your faucet has internal threads, you will need an adapter.
4. Check to make sure the filter has been screwed on evenly. Make sure to not over tighten.
5. Activate the filter by running cold water through the filter for 5 minutes.
6. Replace your filter cartridge regularly. Many filters have lights that turn from green to yellow to red to remind you to replace the filter cartridge. Yellow means it is near the end of its ability to properly filter. Red means it is time to replace. Most lights are triggered by the amount of water filtered (often 100 gallons).

Proper Use of a Faucet Filter to Remove Lead

Only use water from the cold-water tap (from the filter) for consumption (drinking, cooking, and especially for making baby formula). Hot water is likely to contain higher levels of lead and other contaminants.

Replace the filter cartridge regularly.

Anytime the water has not been used for a few hours or longer, flush your pipes by running the cold-water tap until it becomes cold. This may take up to two minutes. If you have a filter, run the water with the filter-off. When water sits in the pipes for long periods of time, it is more likely to contain higher concentrations of lead.

You can flush potential bacteria from the filter by simply running the water for 15 seconds.

PLEASE NOTE --that the length of time a lead water filter effectively removes lead from drinking water depends on the volume of water used, the quality of the water and how much lead is in the water. If you know that your water has high concentrations of lead, more frequent replacement may be needed.

Learn more at freshwaterfuture.org/lead

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