

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Are results of DTSC's sampling – with 39 percent of plumbing fixtures testing above allowable lead levels – statistically representative of all plumbing parts sold in California?**

DTSC's testing does not represent a statistical sampling of all plumbing parts for sale statewide.

### **Where did DTSC purchase the samples?**

DTSC selected three geographic areas within California. The areas included Northern California from Sacramento to Fort Bragg, the Long Beach area and the Los Angeles eastern desert area.

### **Where were the plumbing fixtures tested and how?**

DTSC staff analyzed the fixtures for lead content using the method noted in the DTSC Fact Sheet, "[Testing and Evaluation of Lead Content in Plumbing Products, Materials and Components](#)," dated August 2009. Initial screening was conducted with the X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) INNOV-X System, a hand-held device that measures chemical analysis of materials through use of high energy X-Rays. Samples showing presence of lead above the Method Detected Limit (10-20 mg/kg) for lead were processed for further analyses using EPA SW-846 Method 6010C.

### **What happens now to plumbing products on store shelves that contain lead? Is DTSC going to make them remove these products?**

Relevant sections of the Health and Safety Code do not give DTSC the authority to pursue further action beyond conducting samples and testing them.

### **What else is DTSC doing with the results of this sampling?**

Health and Safety Code section 25214.4.3 requires DTSC to send an annual report to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), which regulates public water systems in California. Health and Safety Code section 25214.4.3 imposes no requirements on CDPH to take action with the information received from DTSC. DTSC will also forward the report and findings to more than 300 California water agencies, consumer interest groups, and other interested persons.

### **Is DTSC planning outreach activities regarding results of this report?**

As part of its ongoing program to reduce toxic substances including lead from the environment, DTSC will continue to work with manufacturers, industry stakeholders and the National Sanitation Foundation Lead Task Force Group. As part of these discussions, DTSC will share testing results and clarify issues related to state standards for lead-free plumbing products.

### **What are retailers, distributors, and manufacturers doing as a result of these findings about plumbing products?**

DTSC has notified identified manufacturers and distributors of products it sampled and provided them the results of testing. Several expressed surprise at the inaccuracy of suppliers' assurances that their plumbing products meet California standards. Some retailers and manufacturers, aware of public concerns about lead in consumer products, have indicated they will investigate their supply chains to find plumbing products that meet California standards.

### **What about my drinking water at home? Should I replace faucets or plumbing parts in my home that were manufactured before new lead-free standards began in 2010?**

DTSC's testing does not measure amounts of lead in drinking water. Product testing identifies only the amount of lead in the plumbing product. There may be many reasons why lead can be found in residential drinking water. Lead in drinking water results in part from corrosion of household plumbing systems. The amount of lead in drinking water depends on plumbing materials, but also depends on the types and amounts of minerals in the water, how long the water stays in the pipes, the amount of wear in the pipes, the water's acidity and its temperature. While you may have older faucets and fixtures, that does not mean that you have high levels of lead in your drinking water.

Water suppliers are required to regularly collect water samples from a portion of the household taps within the system and to test these samples to determine if lead is present in water. If lead levels are consistently above 15 parts per billion, the water supplier must take steps to reduce the amount of lead. To determine the lead results for your water system, contact your local water provider.

### **How do I find my local public water provider for information regarding water quality in my home?**

To find the public water provider for your location look at your water bill or you can search the US EPA database, "[Safe Drinking Water Search for the State of California](#)," and select your water provider from the list. Note that if you are served by a private well, you will need to work with a certified laboratory to sample and analyze your own water.

### **How can I see a copy of the Sampling for Lead Concentrations in California Plumbing Products Report?**

A copy of the report is available to the public by contacting the DTSC Office of Pollution Prevention and Green Technology at (916) 322-3670 or at <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/pollutionprevention/leadinplumbing.cfm>