



**Statement from EPA on Actions to Protect Communities
in Newark, NJ from Lead in Drinking Water
August 11, 2019**

On Friday, August 9, EPA sent a [letter](#) to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the City of Newark asking them to detail for EPA what action they plan to take to respond to new lead in drinking water testing results.

As part of its comprehensive efforts to help protect the people of Newark from lead in its drinking water, EPA has been working in partnership with the City of Newark and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to assess Newark's new lead corrosion control treatment effectiveness.

As part of this effort, EPA recently sampled and tested the water in a few locations in Newark to see if the corrosion control system is dropping the elevated lead levels that present a threat to public health. Through this recent testing, EPA discovered that the household lead filters provided to local residents of Newark by the city may not be performing as expected. Filter effectiveness is dependent on operator use, water chemistry and the level of the contaminants [e.g. lead]. EPA is working diligently with the state and city to understand the cause of the levels of lead being detected after filter use.

EPA believes that, out of an abundance of caution, residents who have lead service lines should be advised to use bottled water for drinking and cooking until the results of the filter testing are fully understood, additional sampling is performed, and a reliable solution can be implemented. EPA has asked the city and state to immediately develop a plan to provide alternative sources of water to its residents in need and to provide guidance regarding flushing lead service drinking water lines before consumption and use. EPA will also work with the city and state to assess alternate filtration options and provide enhanced education and awareness regarding the proper use of filters.

EPA is sensitive to the serious challenges Newark faces as it works to tackle this challenging public health issue. EPA has a long history of working shoulder-to-shoulder with city officials to help implement critically important programs that help strengthen the community and protect homes and families.

EPA has invested, and will continue to invest, significant time and other resources in Newark. EPA helped bring the Newark lead in drinking water issue to light as part of its overall audit of the New Jersey lead and copper rule program. Since then, EPA has worked on Newark's

drinking water issues with community leaders and the state every step of the way. Recently, EPA worked with the state to accelerate funding for Newark's lead line replacement program and is actively providing technical assistance to the city and state, including work to optimize and assess the city's corrosion control program.

EPA stands with the people of Newark and will continue to support the community while developing local capacity. Protecting public health, especially in our homes and children, remains our top priority.