

Corrosion control prevents lead from leaching into the water

Food-grade phosphate, also called ortho-phosphate, is mixed into the drinking water at the treatment plants. The phosphate coats lead pipes and lead plumbing fixtures to prevent lead from dissolving into the water. The Milwaukee Water Works has provided this corrosion control since 1996 at the direction of the EPA. Since then, lead levels in Milwaukee water sampled at customers' taps have decreased by more than 50%.



- The lead pipe on the left is coated to prevent corrosion.
- The lead pipe on the right was not coated and shows how the water dissolved the lead from the pipe.
- Phosphate is a food additive recognized as safe by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Phosphate is found in milk and soda pop.
- Phosphate is the second most abundant mineral in the human body after calcium.
- You'd have to drink 10-15 quarts of Milwaukee water to equal the amount of phosphate in one can of soda pop.