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Drinking Water Notice Issued to Mexia Water System, Inc. Customers

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management is requiring the Mexia Water System, Inc., in Monroe County, to issue a drinking water notice to its customers after testing showed elevated levels of lead in drinking water at three homes.

Laboratory analysis for the monitoring period between July - December found that the three results exceeded the action level of 15 ug/L (micrograms per liter) as set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The sampling consisted of 20 samples collected in different parts of the Mexia Water System, Inc. service area with results ranging from non-detect to 200 ug/L.

The Mexia Water System, Inc.'s laboratory reported that all three confirmation samples collected on Nov. 14 and Nov. 16, did not exceed the EPA action level for lead. At this time, there is no evidence of lead in the water sources being used locally, nor are there any known lead service lines in the system.

On Dec. 31, the Mexia Water System, Inc. submitted results from a corrosion control study and plans to remediate the high levels of lead. ADEM has required that the Mexia Water System, Inc. conduct water quality parameter and source monitoring, continue to monitor 20 sites every six months, and provide educational materials to its customers and other consumers.

The Department will be working closely with the Mexia Water System, Inc. to return the system to compliance as soon as possible.

“Anytime that a lead action level is exceeded is a concern, particularly for young children and pregnant women,” said ADEM Director Lance LeFleur. “Until the Mexia Water System, Inc. is able to demonstrate lead levels that are in compliance there are steps residents can take to reduce exposure.”

ADEM advises customers who are concerned regarding potential lead in their plumbing to take the following steps:

- Run the water for 15-30 seconds to flush lead from plumbing prior to using the water.
- Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Hot water in contact with the pipes can leach more lead, so using cold water can reduce exposures.
- Consider bottled water as an alternative source. Additionally, filters available for home use that will remove lead. NSF International maintains a list of filter products certified to remove lead.
- Boiling water does not remove lead.
- Bathing and showering should be safe, even if the water contains lead over EPA action levels. Human skin does not absorb lead in water.

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