

CHICAGO WATER QUALITY PLANS

CHICAGO'S WATER IS HIGH QUALITY

The Chicago Department of Water Management tests our water 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chicago's water meets or **exceeds all standards** set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Illinois EPA and the drinking water industry.

Chicago passed its most recent EPA review this fall.

Chicago has an **excellent** water source – Lake Michigan – and this fresh water is some of the best drinking water in the world.



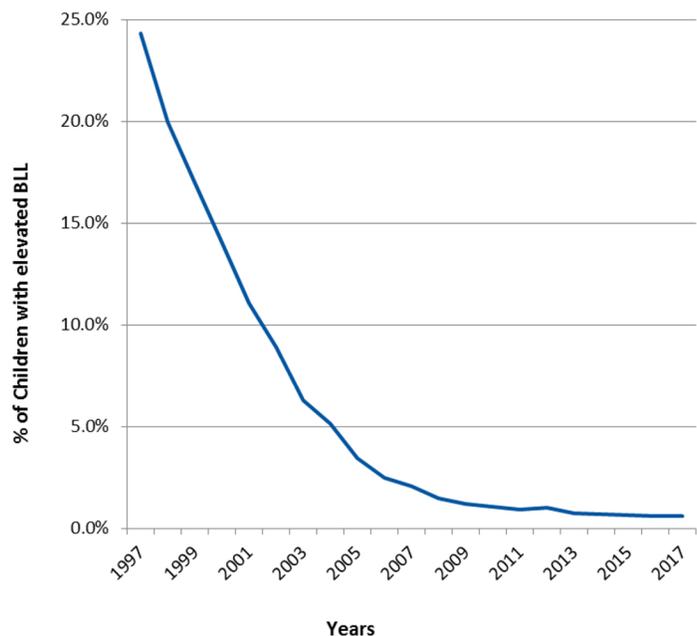
CHILDREN'S LEAD LEVELS DROP DRAMATICALLY IN PAST 20 YEARS

The most important way to understand the health impacts of lead is to measure the level found in children.

Today, **less than one percent** of Chicago children have elevated lead levels, compared to 25 percent in the late 1990s.

Since 2016, CDPH has offered water testing when conducting inspections for children with elevated lead levels. Of those tested, no child with an elevated blood level lived in a home where the water had elevated lead levels.

The most likely culprit for elevated lead in children is lead-based paint, which young children ingest.



ONGOING FREE WATER QUALITY TESTING FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Residents can call 3-1-1 to request **free water testing** at their address. All results are posted online for the public to review at www.chicagowaterquality.org.

Best practices for lowering lead levels include flushing, which means that after water hasn't been used for six hours, running water continuously for at least five minutes before consuming water.

Ways to flush include showering, as well as washing clothes and dishes.

NEXT STEPS

PROACTIVE APPROACH TO ENSURING WATER QUALITY FOR **FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Chicago has **always been** a leader in water quality research.

In 2016, the city started a first-of-its-kind study determine the possible impact of water main construction and meter installation on water quality.

While the study is ongoing, preliminary data indicates that the water main replacement program does not produce large changes in lead concentrations.

According to this preliminary data, water meter installation may have raised lead levels in 51 homes of the 296 homes in the study. More than 80 percent of the homes studied did not have lead levels above the EPA action level after the installation of a meter.

STEP 1 HOMEOWNERS' LEAD SERVICE LINES

- The city engaged CDM Smith, a global engineering firm, to determine the feasibility and framework for the multi-billion cost of potentially replacing lead service lines, which connect homes to the city's water mains.
- Should the recommendations be adopted, Chicago would become the largest city in the nation to address this legacy infrastructure issue.

STEP 2 WATER METERS

- Although further study is needed, out of an abundance of caution, the city will proactively take the following steps:
 - Provide water filters to any household that previously tested above the EPA action level, including through the water quality study, 3-1-1 testing, EPA or CDPH testing programs;
 - Starting with the most recent meter installations, notify all metered homes of the preliminary data. These metered homes may request a water filter set free of charge.
 - Going forward, residents who request a water meter must provide informed consent and enroll in before and after testing to receive the meter. These residents will also receive a free water filter when their meter is installed since test results will not be instantaneously available.

