

# OTTAWA COUNTY REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM

## Lead Testing Private Plumbing Systems

Placed into operation in 1999, the Ottawa County Regional Water Treatment, Transmission and Distribution System, serves the water supply needs of the City of Port Clinton, the Village of Oak Harbor and seven townships in Ottawa County including Bay, Catawba Island, Danbury, Erie, Harris, Portage and Salem. **The regional water system was constructed without any lead piping or service connections.**

State certified water plant operators conduct all required tests of the water supply in strict accordance with United States and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Drinking Water Regulations. One of those tests involves the regular monitoring, testing and adjustment of pH levels in the water supply to ensure that the water is not acidic. Corrosion inhibitors are added to the water at the treatment plant to ensure that the pH of the water is maintained at appropriate levels throughout the transmission and distribution system ensuring the desired scaling of the interior wall of pipes.

**There is no lead in the water coming from the Ottawa County Regional Water System.** However, lead can be an issue within certain private plumbing systems. The structures that are most at risk for lead in their private plumbing systems were generally built before the 1930's and have lead service lines on their properties or lead pipes within their interior plumbing. Structures constructed prior to 1986 using lead solder with copper piping may also be at issue; but at a much lower risk.

Lead and copper testing of a limited number of private plumbing systems is performed throughout the regional water system every three years by Ottawa County as part of a structured US and Ohio EPA Lead and Copper Testing Program. Property owners concerned about the potential for lead exposure in their private plumbing system should have their water professionally analyzed. The Ohio EPA maintains a list of certified laboratories that may be found at the following link: <http://alwtr.us/OEPA-labs>. One of the closest private testing laboratories in this area is Jones and Henry Laboratories, Inc., located at 2567 Tracy Road, Northwood, Ohio 43619. The cost of having a water sample tested for lead is \$20 and will require that the property owner collect the sample and deliver it to the lab. Their phone number is 419-666-0411. You will want to call them before pulling your sample to confirm the exact water sample procedures that they want you to follow. In the event that a water sample does exceed the US and Ohio EPA lead limit of 15 parts per billion (ppb), removing the lead piping, solder and/or lead fixtures is the best, although most costly, solution. NSF 53 approved point of use filters designed to remove lead are another option. For more information regarding how lead in drinking water may be removed, you can visit US EPA's Web Site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead), call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD or contact the Ottawa County Regional Water Treatment Plant at 419-734-7312.

No matter where you live, if you are concerned about the potential for lead exposure from your private plumbing supply, the easiest way to reduce your risk is to let the water from the tap run a few minutes before you use it. This assures that any stagnant water (that has the most risk of containing lead) has been flushed from the private plumbing system.