



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Idaho Public Health Districts

Idaho Public Health Districts

February 2016

A Look at Drinking Water Monitoring in Idaho



Recent news of lead-contaminated drinking water in Flint, Michigan has many Idaho residents wondering

how our state's drinking water is managed, monitored, and kept safe. Safe drinking water is a high priority for Idaho's Local Health Districts (LHD), and one they take very seriously.

Regulation and Monitoring: Who does what?

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) maintains primacy over the federal Safe Drinking Water Act in Idaho. The agency has a long-standing and robust regulatory and educational public drinking water program. Idaho's seven local health districts contract with DEQ to oversee the smallest of the Public Water Systems (PWS) in our districts. A PWS system provides water to the public for human consumption through pipes or other constructed means for carrying water. These systems serve 25 or more people for 60 or more days per year, or have 15 or more service connections.

LHDs regulate three types of drinking water systems, which serve various sized populations, for varying lengths of time and in various environments throughout the state. Approximately half of Idaho's PWSs are *transient non-community water systems*. These systems often provide water in places such as gas stations, or campgrounds, where people do not remain for long periods of time. Approximately 38 percent of Idaho's PWSs are *community water systems*, which supply water to the same population year-round. The other remaining PWSs monitored by LHDs are *non-transient non-community systems*, which may include schools, factories, office buildings and hospitals that have their own water systems.

Your LHD's role is to ensure system owners and managers test the water on a prescribed schedule — this includes testing for lead, which is required every three years per the Safe Drinking Water Act. Idaho's health districts also ensure information and guidance is provided to users by the water system if a problem arises, and conduct periodic sanitary surveys of wellheads, pump houses, storage tanks, and treatment components to ensure the system is functioning properly.

Idaho DEQ reviews public water system engineering plans for corrosion treatment. There are very few drinking water systems in Idaho that are required to have corrosion control. In response to Flint, Michigan, Idaho DEQ reviewed historical data and there appears to be very little evidence of lead service lines in Idaho, which has been one of the main issues in Flint, Michigan. Additionally, there were less than 5% of Idaho's drinking water systems that had lead exceedances since 2012. Additional sampling is performed to verify the need for treatment.

What's in your water?

Customers of community public water systems can keep tabs on their drinking water each year through annual Consumer Confidence Reports. These reports are required for issuance by PWSs and are typically mailed once a year with your water bill. For customers of non-community public water systems, drinking water system monitoring results can be found on the DEQ's website under the Water Quality PWS Switchboard at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/>. For those looking to test water from their own faucet, water testing is available through the state laboratory and private labs in the state. Talk to your LHD for information.

Keeping drinking water safe and healthy is a significant responsibility that requires the work of many community partners and agencies. Your local health district shares in the responsibility of maintaining safe drinking water in Idaho and is committed to protecting public health.

HEALTHY PEOPLE IN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

PANHANDLE HEALTH DISTRICT (1)	PUBLIC HEALTH - IDAHO NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT (2)	SOUTHWEST DISTRICT HEALTH (3)	CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH (4)	SOUTH CENTRAL PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT (5)	SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO PUBLIC HEALTH (6)	EASTERN IDAHO PUBLIC HEALTH (7)
Director: Lora Whalen 208-415-5102 www.phd1.idaho.gov	Director: Carol Moehrle 208-799-0344 www.idahopublichealth.com	Director: Nikole Zogg 208-455-5315 www.publichealthidaho.com	Director: Russell Duke 208-327-8501 www.cdhd.idaho.gov	Director: Rene LeBlanc 208-737-5902 www.phd5.idaho.gov	Director: Maggie Mann 208-239-5258 www.siphidaho.org	Director: Geri Rackow 208-533-3163 www.EIPH.Idaho.gov