



Water Lines

BIRCH BAY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT
SERVING THE GREATER BIRCH BAY AREA SINCE 1968

SPRING | NEWSLETTER | 2016

District's Drinking Water Status

The Birch Bay Water and Sewer District has been paying close attention to what unfolded in Flint, Michigan and would like to inform its customers that the water distribution meets or exceeds current water quality standards and that our water is at a low risk for lead contamination.

The District's water distribution system and most local residential systems are much newer than the City of Flint's and other areas, in which old residential piping may have lead content as much as 100%. The District has been using LEAD-FREE materials since 2014. Low-lead materials, such as brass saddles and shut-off valves, were used for years prior to that. Residential piping in the District is copper or poly (polyethylene) pipe, which is a very low health risk. Houses built since 1986 are generally very low-risk. Houses built in the 1950's or earlier are usually considered to have a higher risk for lead contamination.

The District is required by Washington State Department of Health to monitor for lead and copper in their system. The District has taken 161 lead and copper samples in residences since 1998 with NO EXCEEDANCES. As a result, the District is on a reduced monitoring schedule of once every three years between June and September. The District will be collecting its next round of lead and copper samples this summer.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The District is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components.



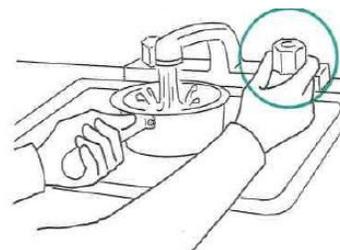
Lead Free

If Concerned About Lead in Your Residential Plumbing

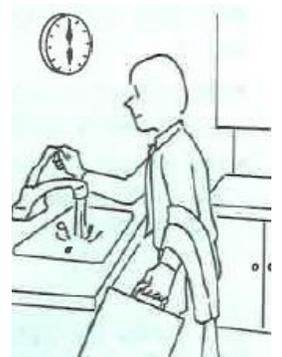
FLUSH YOUR PLUMBING: This helps to clear plumbing of water that may have picked up lead from the pipes

WHEN AND HOW TO FLUSH:

- Flush water to be used for drinking or cooking whenever plumbing has not been used for 6 hours or more.
- Use only cold water drinking or cooking. Hot water causes more pipe corrosion and may contain higher levels of lead.



Use cold water only and let water run before using for cooking and drinking



Securing Water for Future Generations

In 2015, the District was awarded \$700,000 to drill up to four exploration wells and conduct a feasibility study. This is known as the North Whatcom Regional Source Project. It has the potential to enhance flows in the Nooksack basin by delivering potable groundwater from the Blaine Groundwater Management Area to the Nooksack basin. These supplies could support water banking, address health risks and enhance drought protection.



District General Manager Dan Eisses gave a presentation on Regional Water System Development to the League of Women Voters in February. The presentation informed the interested group about the history of the Blaine and Birch Bay water system, Regional Water Project concept and information on the District's recent Department of Ecology Grant.

The full presentation is available to the public on the website in the District Form tab under District Information. If you would like additional information, please contact the District at 360-371-7100.

Rain Barrel Workshops Offered in April

The City and District are teaming up again with BBWARM to host two rain barrel workshops this spring for residents of Blaine and Birch Bay. The workshops will cover the basic principles of rainwater collection and its benefit to water supply and stormwater management then provide hands-on instruction to install and maintain your very own rain barrel. Space is limited to 20 households each workshop. Registered participants will take home a pre-drilled 55-gallon barrel.

The workshops will be held at the District's office on Thursday, April 21st from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. and at the Blaine Senior Center on Saturday, April 23rd from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., rain or shine. The workshops are free, but registration is required. Register online at www.bbwarm.whatcomcounty.org or contact Ingrid Enschede at 360-778-6229.



Workshop participants starting to build their own barrel

Birch Bay Stormwater Hotline

The Birch Bay Watershed and Aquatic Resources Management (BBWARM) District maintains a hotline for citizens to call with questions or concerns regarding drainage, erosion, or water quality issues in the Birch Bay watershed. The hotline number changed this fall. **The new hotline number is (360) 778-6300.** Staff at Whatcom County Public Works answer hotline calls and are available to answer questions, investigate problems, or help the caller determine the best government agency or County department to address their specific issue. The hotline is a good resource to get help with non-emergency stormwater related problems. As always, call 911 to report any life-safety issue.

For more information on the stormwater hotline or BBWARM, contact Ingrid Enschede, Program Specialist with Whatcom County Public Works, at (360) 778-6229 or visit www.bbwarm.whatcomcounty.org.



Birch Bay Watershed and Aquatic Resources Management District
FINDING STORMWATER SOLUTIONS

1-Call Hotline - 360.778.6300

For questions or concerns regarding stormwater, erosion, or water quality in the Birch Bay Watershed.

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