

THE BASICS OF WATER TESTING

1. The EPA's rule requires water utilities to monitor drinking water for lead at customer taps.
2. Those utilities (there are about 2,000 in Georgia) must identify homes at highest risk of lead contamination.
3. Somewhere between 5 and 50 homes—depending on the size of the water system—are tested at regular intervals.
4. Residents who agree let the water sit for at least 6 hours, draw a sample from a sink, then leave the bottles for the water system to pick up.
5. Analysis of the samples is usually done by a state lab, and the results are sent to the water utility and the EPA.
6. The water utility is required to send the results to customers tested within 30 days.
7. If more than 10 percent of homes test at levels higher than the EPA threshold, the water system must tell all of its customers of that result, then take steps to correct the problem.

