

# Did *you* KNOW?

From source to tap, BJWSA performs tests throughout the system each day to ensure safe drinking water. Raw source water is tested routinely to detect contaminants before it enters the treatment plants. At the plant, water quality experts test the water after each stage of the treatment process. In the distribution system, we collect more than 100 water samples each month to monitor the quality of water once it has left the treatment plant.

## Lead and Water Supplies

While lead is a common, naturally occurring metal found throughout the environment, it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like the Savannah River. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion or wearing away of materials containing lead that are in household plumbing.

**No detectable lead.** There is no detectable lead in BJWSA's sources of drinking water - the Savannah River and the Floridan Aquifer.

**Lead solder was banned in 1985.** Lead in drinking water is almost always associated with the corrosion of lead-containing plumbing fixtures and solder used in constructing homes, businesses, and schools. Plumbing installed in homes from 1970 to 1985, and water standing in lead-containing faucets are the most likely causes of high levels of lead in drinking water.

**BJWSA uses ductile iron and pvc pipe in our distribution system.** The majority of BJWSA's water mains are made of ductile iron with a concrete lining and polyvinyl chloride (pvc). Most household plumbing is made of pvc, galvanized steel, or copper with a minimal lead content.

**BJWSA tests for lead in drinking water.** The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) requires BJWSA to test lead levels every three years. When we test for lead, BJWSA draws water samples from customers' faucets in communities throughout our service area. We only have to test every three years because of the continuous low levels of lead detected in our water.

**BJWSA began corrosion treatment in the early 90s.** BJWSA adjusts the acidity, or pH, of the water to maintain a neutral state, around 7.4. We also reduce corrosion of pipes by adding ortho-phosphates to coat the pipes internally to prevent the iron, lead and copper from leaching into the water. Phosphates are made up of phosphorus (an essential element for all living beings) and oxygen. They are common in the environment, especially as nutrients for plants, and are very useful to us for reducing the corrosion of our pipes and your plumbing.

**BJWSA keep customers informed.** We believe that the customer has the right to know if there is a problem with our drinking water or if we violate any drinking water standard. BJWSA has a proven track record of keeping customers informed on water issues.

### MORE QUESTIONS?

Our website is packed with helpful information! Visit [www.bjwsa.org](http://www.bjwsa.org)