

[REDACTED]

From: EIR
Sent: 10 April 2025 11:50
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]
Attachments: lead data for customer taps in Norfolk.xlsx

Dear requester

Provision of requested information

Thank you for your request for information about lead in customer's water in Norfolk in 2024, which we received on 13 March 2025. Your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Background

Typically, older properties pre-1970s, have a higher likelihood of lead pipework within the property. Lead solder products have been banned for use in drinking water supply since 1987, but instances are still found where lead solder has been used within customer properties after 1987, and this can result in lead levels at customer taps above 10 µg/L.

We have a dedicated lead advice telephone line which is for use by any of our water supply customers where a suite of samples can be arranged after contacting the Lead Advice line. Customers can also request a free lead test using our website.

Along with the rest of the industry, we are committed to the Water UK's ambition of being lead free by 2050 and are planning to invest £15 million in the next five years towards this goal.

If our sampling detects a lead reading of above 10 µg/L, we will automatically replace any lead communications pipe (the pipe that takes water from our water main to the boundary of the property). Any pipework within the property boundary (the supply pipe) is the responsibility of the homeowner. This might be the external supply pipe which runs from the boundary into the house or the pipework inside the house itself. We would always provide advice on how a customer can replace their lead pipework.

1/ How many tests for lead in consumer's water were carried out in Norfolk in 2024 or the last full year for which figures are available.

There were 2,256 sampling events in 2024, inclusive of all reasons for the sampling (regulatory monitoring, customer query, project sampling) across our Public Water Supply Zones (PWSZs) present in Norfolk. A 'sampling event' relates to a sample taken on a particular day and this could be sampling from a previously sampled property taken as part of our investigations, so the number of sampling events quoted is not equivalent to the number of properties.

2/ How many of these tests revealed the presence of lead.

There were 51 sampling events from 'Non flushed, variable standing' (NFVS) samples, (also called 'spot' samples), that contained over 10ug/l lead, where the flushed sample contained under 10ug/l lead. There were two sampling events where both the NFVS and the flushed samples contained over 10ug/l lead.

3/ Where was water found to contain lead - I am happy for this to be at the level of a town/community rather than a more specific address to allay any data protection issues.

Where lead was identified above the legal limit of 10ug/l, the first four digits of the postcode have been supplied in Column C of the attached Excel spreadsheet.

4/ What work did you carry out in response - ie replacing pipes etc.

As detailed above, when any sample result detects lead levels over 10 µg/L, we will replace our communication pipe if it is lead.

Communication pipes, run from the water main to the boundary of the customer's property and are the responsibility of the water company. The supply pipe, which runs from the boundary of the customer's property to the kitchen tap, is the responsibility of the homeowner.

Seventeen of the samples mentioned in the answer to question 1 above, were taken as part of our planned programme of work in Norwich. This is where we are proactively targeting streets in Norwich to replace lead communication pipes. In addition to proactively replacing the communication pipes on these streets, we ran a small trial (which has now finished), offering to replace the customer-owned supply pipe to the point of entry to the property for some of the streets. We took additional samples in these areas, to help customers to decide if they would like to take us up on the offer of a free supply pipe replacement to the point of entry to their property.

In the data provided, of the samples results containing greater than 10ug/l lead, 17 customers were part of the trial and offered a free supply pipe replacement up to the point of entry at their property. Of these, ten are confirmed to have taken up the offer of a free supply pipe replacement.

As part of our investigations, we also tested some of the soldered joints on internal pipework for the presence of lead solder. Where lead solder was detected, these results have been highlighted with an asterisk* on the attached spreadsheet.

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Legal Director, Anglian Water Services, Lancaster House, Lancaster Way, Ermine Business Park, Huntingdon PE29 6XU

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this email, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

EIR Team

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