



## **EPA's Final Lead-Free Rule**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has published its long-awaited final rule on the "Use of Lead-Free Pipes, Fittings, Fixtures, Solder and Flux for Drinking Water." This rule is aimed at protecting public health, especially children's health, from the risks associated with lead exposure. Lead is known to be introduced into drinking water by corrosion of plumbing products and components of public water systems (pipes, fittings, fixtures, solder, and flux).

The final rule codifies changes to the Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act of 2011 (RLDWA) and the Community Fire Safety Act of 2013 (CFSA). The Water Quality Association submitted comments and was approached by the agency to have additional dialogue during the rule-making process in 2017.

The scope of this new rule covers any products that contact drinking water. According to the EPA, the final rule applies to, "any person who would introduce plumbing products into commerce, such as manufacturers, importers, wholesalers, distributors, re-sellers, and retailers. It also applies to any person who would use plumbing products in the installation or repair of a public water system, such as an installation contractor, or in a residential or nonresidential facility providing water for human consumption, such as a plumber."

The rule requires that a manufacturer introducing a new product into the marketplace during the next three years would need to comply with the weighted average lead content requirements. However, certification by an ANSI accredited certification body would not be required until September 1, 2023. Small businesses with fewer than 10 employees or any business making a custom fabrication may elect to self-certify in lieu of obtaining certification from an ANSI accredited third party certification body.

Certification standards are being recognized by the EPA to ensure compliance with the final ruling -- NSF/ANSI Standard 372 and NSF/ANSI/CAN Standard 61. WQA's independent lab and Gold Seal program test and certify products to these standards. This final rule does not require any marking or labeling of lead-free pipes, fittings, or fixtures on products or packages. However, EPA recommends marking and labeling of lead-free products and packages to indicate compliance with the rule.

More information about the ruling is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/sdwa/use-lead-free-pipes-fittings-fixtures-solder-and-flux-drinking-water>. More information about WQA's Gold Seal Certification program is available at <https://www.wqa.org/product-cert>.

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