## Lead Remediation Grant Details.

### *****What is a “Remediation of Domestic Lead Piping Grant”?*****

The grant is available to assist owners of premises connected to a domestic water supply with the costs of replacing lead piping or related fittings located within the internal distribution system of the premises, as defined in the Water Services Act 2007. The premises concerned must be occupied by the applicant as his or her principle private residence. Those who qualify will be in the low to middle income bracket, (€50,000 = €4,000; €50,001 - €75,000 = €2,500).

***Where can I obtain an Application Form and to whom do I apply for this Grant?***

Tipperary County Council, Water Services, Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

***What does Internal Distribution System mean?***

This refers to the water system within your home, containing the piping, fittings and plumbing.

***What is intended by “the curtilage of your premises”?***

Your garden, path, driveway, or that area of **your** property, through which pipe network runs in order to connect your home to the public supply.

### *Am I Eligible for a Grant?*

You will need to complete an application form and submit this with supporting documentation to Tipperary County Council, Water Services, Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, in order to receive a definite decision regarding eligibility. You **may** be eligible for assistance if:

1. you have a notification from a Water Supplier advising that there is likely to be lead plumbing, (pipes and fittings), within the curtilage of your premises;**or**
2. you have a Certificate issued within the 6 months immediately prior to the date of application by a Laboratory, which is Accredited for testing for lead in drinking water, which shows a parametric value for lead in the water supply at your premises which exceeds the statutory limit. Currently the Statutory Limit is 10μg/l, (10micrograms per litre). The Laboratory issuing that Certificate **must** be Accredited by the Irish National Accreditation Board, (INAB). Health Services Executive is an Accredited Laboratory for the purpose;
3. your Household Income is within the limits set, (see below);
4. the approved cost of works to be carried out is greater than €200.

***What supporting documentation do I need?***

* Evidence of Household Income:
	+ Persons in the PAYE, (Pay as You Earn category), need a Balancing Statement or equivalent document, P60s, for the Tax Year before the year of application;
	+ Persons who are Self-Employed need a Notice of Income Tax Assessment or equivalent;
	+ Both Balancing Statements and Notices of Income Tax Assessment are issued by the Revenue Commissioners. Equivalent documents include signed statements or letters issued by the Revenue Commissioners, showing the Taxable Income for the Tax year before the application was made.
	+ Persons with an Income from Social Welfare need a Statement of Taxable Income from the Department of Social Protection.
* Contractor Carrying Out the Work:
	+ Receipts from each Contractor you engaged to carry out replacement work. These documents must outline the work carried out and the cost associated;
	+ Certification from those Contractors who did the work to the effect that all materials used, (pipes and fittings), are of appropriate quality and that the proper standard of workmanship has been applied.
	+ It is the applicant’s responsibility to satisfy themselves that all Contractors engaged are competent to carry out the work and suitable materials are used.
	+ **Neither the County Council or Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will guarantee the works carried out. Payment of a Grant will not indicate that either body has responsibility in this regard or endorses the quality of work carried out;**
	+ Evidence of Tax Clearance for each Contractor engaged to carry out work. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the Contractor they engage has such evidence.
* Letter from Water Supplier advising that there may be lead piping present in the Applicant’s home; or
* A Certificate issued within the 6 months immediately prior to the date of application by a Laboratory, which is accredited by Irish National Accreditation Board, (INAB), for testing for lead in drinking water, which shows a parametric value for lead in the water supply at your premises which exceeds the statutory limit. Currently the Statutory Limit is 10 μg/l, (10 micrograms per litre). The Laboratory issuing that Certificate **must** be accredited by the INAB.
* Some Accredited Laboratories are:
	+ Public Health Microbiology Laboratory, University College Hospital, Microbiology Testing Laboratory, Newcastle Road, Galway. 🕾 0914 54 47 86 email : enda.burke@hse.ie ;
	+ City Analysts, Shannon Town Centre, Shannon, Co. Clare. 🕾 (061) 36 00 3, email: ;
	+ Environmental Laboratories Services Ltd., Acorn Business Campus, Mahon Industrial Park, Cork. 🕾 (021) 45 36 141, email: info@elsltd.com;
	+ ALS Ltd., Carrigeen Business Park, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. 🕾 (052) 61 78 100, email: information.ireland@alsglobal.com ;
	+ DO NOTE - this is not a full list of Accredited Laboratories. Contact the INAB at 🕾 1890 289 389 for a full listing. You do need to have the Laboratory you engage confirm that they are accredited for the purpose of testing for lead in drinking water under the Drinking Water Regulations.

***If I qualify for a grant when will my grant be paid***?

Once work is carried out and all supporting documents are on file, there will need to be an inspection of the work done by County Council personnel. You will need to complete a Bank Details form and forward this to the County Council, (Tipperary County Council makes payment by way of EFT).

***Where can I obtain a list of Accredited Laboratories?***

The Health Services Executive is an Accredited Laboratory for the purposes. See the website at the link:

***Who is a Water Supplier?***

Irish Water is a Water Supplier for the public water schemes. During the National Metering exercise IW will have identified a number of houses where there **may** be lead piping present. In those cases IW will have issued a letter to this effect to the homeowners. This letter will suffice to attach to one’s application for the grant.

You may have a connection to a Group Water Scheme, and that local Group Water Scheme is a Water Supplier in such circumstances.

If you are sharing a private well with another user, the owner of the private well is the Water Supplier in such a case.

***My water source is from my own well. I do have lead plumbing within my home – can I apply for assistance?***

Yes, you can. You will require a Certificate from an Accredited Laboratory for testing for lead in drinking water. The Accreditation must be by the Irish National Accreditation Board, (INAB). There are other conditions with which you need to comply.

***I carried out works in 2015 – can I apply for a Grant?***

No the Grant Scheme came into effect in February, 2016. Work carried out before 12/02/2016 does not qualify.

***Are there Income Limits?***

Yes. The level of grant aid available is determined on the basis of gross household income.  That is the gross income of the home owner(s).

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| **Household Income** | **% of approved costs available** | **Maximum Available** |
| Up to €50,000 | 80% | €4,000 |
| €50,001 - €75,000 | 50% | €2,500 |
| Greater than €75,000 | Nil. | Nil. |

***What is intended by the phrase “gross household income”?***

Home Owner’s gross income, (that before tax), along with the gross income of the Home Owner’s Spouse in the year prior to that of submitting an application. So where one submits an application on 10th August, 2016, the income documentation should relate to the year 01/01/2015 – 31/12/2015.

***Is there a maximum expenditure in order to qualify?***

No. Income Limits provide a *ceiling* for the maximum grant payable.

* Maximum grant payable for persons with Household Income of up to €50,000 is €4,000 or 80% of the Approved Cost of work.
* Maximum grant payable for persons with Household Income of €50,001 to €75,000 is €2,500 or 50% of the Approved Cost of work.
* Where Household Income is €75,001 or more, there is no assistance available.

***Is there a minimum expenditure in order to qualify?***

Yes, work with an approved cost of €200 or less does not qualify for assistance.

[ Information Notes on Grants Payable under the Domestic Lead Remediation](http://www.meath.ie/CountyCouncil/WaterServices/RemediationofDomesticLeadPiping/File%2C62970%2Cen.pdf)pdf, 68kb

[ Regulations - Grants Payable under the Domestic Lead Remediation](http://www.meath.ie/CountyCouncil/WaterServices/RemediationofDomesticLeadPiping/File%2C62971%2Cen.pdf)pdf, 98kb

[ Form - Grants Payable under the Domestic Lead Remediation](http://www.meath.ie/CountyCouncil/WaterServices/RemediationofDomesticLeadPiping/File%2C62972%2Cen.docx)doc, 59kb

**General Questions Related to Lead.**

**Where is lead found and what is it used for?**

Lead is a metal which is found in soil, rocks, air and water. Lead has many different uses. It is used for making batteries, roofing material and metal products such as pipes and solder, (used for joining pipes).

**How can I be exposed to lead?**

Lead can be inhaled, (breathed in), if present in air or dust and can be swallowed if present in food or water. Over the past decades, lead has been removed from petrol and paint - since then Irish people generally are exposed to very little lead. For most people, food is their main source of lead intake. People with lead plumbing and lead pipes in their house or supplying their house can be exposed to lead in drinking water.

**How can lead affect my health?**

Legislation to control the use of lead has meant that acute lead poisoning is now almost unknown. Long term exposure to lead can affect the development of a child’s brain leading to problems with learning, behaviour and attention. Lead may harm the kidneys and may contribute to high blood pressure. Lead has also been linked to cancer. It is classified as ‘probably carcinogenic’ to humans. This means that we are not sure if it causes cancer in humans but that we know it can cause cancer in animals.

Recent scientific evidence shows that regular intake of even low levels of lead can have small health effects, especially on the brain development of infants, young children and babies in the womb. There are many factors which influence a child’s brain development, including their physical, social, family and learning environment. These are likely to have a far greater impact than lead.

**How does lead get into drinking water?**

* Water does not usually contain lead when it leaves a water treatment plant.
* Lead can get into drinking water from lead pipes or lead plumbing (including solder and fittings).
* Lead was sometimes used in water mains pipes. While most of these have been replaced, some lead pipes remain.
* Lead pipes were also used to connect buildings to the water mains at the stop tap outside (also called the external stopcock).
* Lead pipes, lead plumbing and lead-lined water tanks were sometimes used in buildings built up to and including the 1970s.
* Buildings built up to and including the 1970s may have lead in their drinking water if the inside lead plumbing or the outside lead pipes have not been replaced. These buildings should be checked for lead plumbing both inside and outside by a qualified plumber.
* Lead pipes are not usually found in buildings built since the 1970s. However, lead solder and lead fittings may have been used in more recently-built buildings.
* The chances of lead getting into drinking water from lead pipes and lead plumbing can depend on the chemical make-up of the water. Some types of water such as soft water and warm water can pick up lead more easily.
* By changing the chemical make-up of the water, water suppliers may be able to reduce the amount of lead which is picked up from lead pipes and lead plumbing.
* The level of lead in drinking water is more likely to be higher if the water is stagnant (still or stationary in the pipe).

**Why has lead in drinking water received so much attention recently?**

The legal limit of lead in drinking water in Europe has been gradually reduced, from 50µg per litre in 1988 to 10µg per litre in December 2013. This was done as part of a greater plan to reduce everybody’s lifetime exposure to lead to the lowest possible level. However, some drinking water may not yet meet this new limit.

**Who is most affected by lead in drinking water?**

Because lead affects the developing brain, the risk is greatest for young children, infants and babies in the womb. Bottle-fed infants are most affected by lead in drinking water, because for the first 6 months of life, all of their food comes from formula made up with drinking water. They also drink a lot of liquid for their body weight. Children and infants absorb more lead than adults.

**What is the HSE’s health advice on lead in drinking water?**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has looked at the evidence and advises that level of lead in drinking water is now considered to be completely safe. It is best to keep everybody’s exposure to lead, from all sources (drinking, eating, inhaling), as low as possible. One should try to drink water with as little lead in it as possible.

**Is drinking water tested for lead?**

Water supplies that come under the European Union Drinking Water Regulations are tested for lead. Testing is usually carried out at the kitchen tap of homes or buildings which randomly chosen. Most individual buildings are not tested. Some small private water supplies are not usually tested.

**How do I know if there is lead in my drinking water?**

See if you have lead pipes or lead plumbing. If you are on a public supply and have had a meter installed, you can obtain information about whether or not lead was found during the meter installation. Contact [Irish Water](https://www.water.ie/help-centre/contact-us/). A qualified plumber could help you.  See ‘[Drinking Water Consumer Advice Note – Lead](http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/hl/water/drinkingwater/lead/EPA_HSE_Drinking_Water_Consumer_Advice_Note_Lead.pdf)’.

If you find lead plumbing or lead pipes, either inside your house or building or outside your house or building, you should have your drinking water tested. The level of lead in drinking water can be different in different buildings on the same water supply. The level of lead depends on:

* whether there are lead pipes or lead plumbing in the building, or whether these have been replaced;
* the length of lead pipes in the building;
* whether the building has an individual connection to the water main or has a shared connection with other buildings;
* the amount of water used (dishwasher, showers, washing machine); and
* the softness and temperature of the water.

**How can I get my water tested?**

If you wish to get your water tested for lead you should contact your Water Supplier for advice:

* Public Water Supplies – [Irish Water](https://www.water.ie/help-centre/contact-us/);
* Private Water Supplies – your Group Water Scheme Committee or the Owner of your Private Supply (this might be the Developer of a Private Housing Estate, for instance);
* Private Wells – a number of private and public laboratories offer testing of drinking water.

**If I find lead in my drinking water, what should I do?**

If the level of lead from the cold water tap in the kitchen is above the legal level (10 µg per litre), running (flushing) the water before using it for drinking or cooking may lower the level of lead. However, the only way to know if flushing works is by testing.

Your water supplier should advise you on appropriate testing, flushing and re-testing.  This will tell you how much water needs to be run off before using it for drinking or cooking.

Whether running the water reduces the level of lead in the water, or not, will depend on the length of the lead pipes or on where the lead is coming from in the plumbing system.

If, after running the water, the level of lead stays above 10 µg per litre, you should use safe drinking water from some other source - especially for bottle-fed infants, young children and pregnant women.

Tell all users of your property, including lodgers, long-term visitors, people renting or buying your property, of steps that can be taken to keep their intake of lead in drinking water as low as possible.

The long term solution to dealing with lead in your drinking water is to replace all lead pipes and all lead plumbing. The building owner is responsible for pipes from the mains stop tap or external stopcock and for internal plumbing. The water supplier is responsible for the water mains pipes up to the external stopcock.

See ‘[Drinking Water Consumer Advice Note – Lead](http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/hl/water/drinkingwater/lead/EPA_HSE_Drinking_Water_Consumer_Advice_Note_Lead.pdf)’ for information on pipe layout and ownership.

Before replacing lead pipes and lead plumbing in your ownership, you should contact your water supplier (see above). Replacing all lead pipes in a co-ordinated way is usually the best approach.

**I think I might have lead in my drinking water but my water has not been tested, what should I do?**

If you have lead pipes or lead plumbing, you **may** have lead in your drinking water. If your water has not been tested, you can take precautionary action.

* Only use water from the cold water tap in the kitchen for drinking, cooking and making baby formula. This is called the ‘rising main’. It comes straight into your house from the water mains. The water from this tap is usually moving and flowing and has not been stagnant (still or stationary). Water from other taps in your house may have been stagnant in tanks and pipes for longer periods of time and, therefore, more likely to have a higher level of lead; and
* If the tap has not been used for several hours, running (flushing) the water before using it for drinking or cooking may lower the level of lead.

The only way to know if you have lead in your drinking water, and if flushing lowers it, is by testing. If your pipes are long or have a complicated layout, perhaps connected to other properties, flushing has been known to increase the level of lead in your drinking water.

**Is there anything else I need to know about lead and drinking water in general?**

Boiling the water does not remove lead. It may slightly increase the level of lead in drinking water. Employers and managers of buildings used by the public, (schools, crèches, hospitals, health centres, etc), are responsible for ensuring that the drinking water complies with the lead limit of 10 µg per litre.

**If my water has high lead levels, is it safe to take a bath or shower?**

Even if the lead level is above 10 µg per litre, you can use the water for bathing and showering, toilet flushing, laundry and dishwashing.

**What alternative sources of drinking water could I use?**

It is important that any alternative source of drinking water is safe.

Private Wells:

Lead in drinking water is usually from lead plumbing and lead pipes inside or just outside the house. Switching to a well, but using the same plumbing or pipes, is therefore unlikely to bring down the level of lead in your water. If you use water from a private well, you should check that it is safe to drink. See [Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) householder information on private wells](http://www.epa.ie/water/dw/hhinfo/).

Bottled Water:

* Bottled water can be used for drinking, cooking and to make up infant formula. The World Health Organization recommends that babies should be breastfed for the first 6 months of life.
* It is best not to use bottled water labelled as ‘Natural Mineral Water’ to make up infant feeds as it can have high levels of sodium (salt) and other minerals. All other bottled water is regulated to the same standards as the drinking water from the cold water tap in your kitchen, if your water supply is a regulated supply.
* If bottled water is used to make up infant formula it should be boiled (rolling boil for 1 minute) once, and cooled in the normal way. Do not reboil.
* Ready-to-use infant formula that does not need added water can also be used.

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