SAFEGUARDS
SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

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US PRESIDENT SIGNS REDUCTION IN LEAD BILL

On January 4, 2011, the US President signed into law the 'Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act' (S 3874, 111th Congress (2009-2010)[1]. This amends the nation's "Safe Drinking Water Act' to eliminate toxic lead from drinking water by reducing the amount of lead permitted in new plumbing materials. The law lowers the current lead standards from 8% to 0.25% for faucets and other plumbing fittings[2].

Several health studies have concluded that much smaller amounts of lead exposure can have serious impacts on children and adults, including kidney disease, reduced intelligence, hypertension, hearing loss, and brain damage. Aging infrastructures, including pipe and plumbing system components, are the main contributors of trace amounts of lead in the water supply today. The new law delineates a formula for calculating the weighted average lead content from plumbing materials[1]. The new law will take effect on January 4, 2014; 36 months after the date of enactment of the Act. Highlights of the new law are summarised in Table 1.

1. Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act, Public Law 111-380 (S 3874), 111th Congress, 2009-2010, Final as Pass Both House and Senate,
2. Safe Drinking Water Act, US Environmental Protection Agency, and references therein

SUBSTANCE	REGULATION (BILL, SESSION)	SCOPE	REQUIREMENT	EFFECTIVE DATE
Lead	PL 111-380 (S 3874, 111th Congress, 2009-2010)	Solder or Flux	≤ 0.2 %	January 4, 2014
		Wetted surfaces of pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings and fixtures	≤ 0.25 % (weighted average)	

Table 1

EXEMPTION

Pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings or fixtures, including backflow preventers, that are used exclusively for nonpotable services such as manufacturing, industrial processing, irrigation, outdoor watering, or any other uses where water is not anticipated to be used for human consumption

Toilets, bidets, urinals, fill valves, flushometer valves, tub fillers, shower valves, service saddles, or water distribution main gate valves that are 2 inches in diameter or larger

SGS will follow up and keep you informed about developments on regulations or policies in consumer products as a complementary service

Throughout our global network of laboratories, we are able to provide a wide range of services, including analytical testing and consultancy, for lead in solder and pipe-fitting related products for the US and international markets. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

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