

SAFEGUARDS

CONSUMER GOODS AND RETAIL

HARDGOODS

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US SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT SETS NEW LIMITS FOR LEAD IN PLUMBING FIXTURES

An amendment to the Safe Drinking Water Act set a lead limit of 0.25% in plumbing and fixtures for use in systems that provide water for human consumption.

The Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act of 2011 (Public Law 111-380, 111th Congress) amended the definition of “lead free” for plumbing fixtures and fittings under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in the US. As of 4 January 2014, the maximum allowable level of lead in the wetted surfaces of pipes, pipe fittings, and fixtures is no more than 0.25% (2500 mg/kg) as a weighted average and no more than 0.2% (2000 mg/kg) with respect to solder and flux.¹ These limits apply only to those plumbing materials used to deliver potable water for human consumption and do not apply to those materials that deliver non-potable water, such as water for industrial processing applications.

This regulation is intended to ensure that water distribution systems do not cause the lead concentration in water to exceed the EPA’s drinking water action level of 0.015 mg/L.² Highlights of the amendment are summarised in Table 1.



TABLE 1.

JURISDICTION	REGULATION	SUBSTANCE	SCOPE	REQUIREMENT	EFFECTIVE DATE
US	PL 111-380 (amending the Safe Drinking Water Act)	Lead	Solder and flux	≤ 0.2%	1 January 2014
			Wetted surfaces of pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings and fixtures	≤ 0.25% (weighted average)	

¹ [PUBLIC LAW 111-380 JAN 4, 2011 TO AMEND THE SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT TO REDUCE LEAD IN DRINKING WATER](#)

² [US EPA - LEAD AND COPPER RULE: A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE](#)

Throughout our global network of laboratories, we are able to provide a range of services, including analytical testing for lead in plumbing and plumbing fixtures for the US and worldwide markets. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.



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