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Association**

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The Authoritative Resource on Safe Water®

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# **Regulatory Advisory**

**TO: AWWA Leadership  
All Utilities**

**FROM: AWWA Government Affairs**

**DATE: May 1, 2012**

<b>Who:</b>	<b>U.S. Water Utilities</b>
<b>What:</b>	<b>SDWA Definition of Lead-Free is Changing</b>
<b>When:</b>	<b>Action Needed to Comply by January 4, 2014</b>

AWWA member utilities should be aware of an upcoming compliance deadline that could significantly impact procurement and inventory management of meters and other distribution system components.. This compliance deadline is the result of revisions to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) that President Obama signed into law in January, 2011 (Public Law 111-380).

As of January 4, 2014 it will be illegal to use any pipe, any pipe or plumbing fitting or fixture, any solder, or any flux, in the installation or repair of a public water system or customer's drinking water plumbing unless it meets a new definition of lead-free. The new definition of lead free is calculated differently (and is much lower) than the current lead free requirement (<8.8% lead). After January 4, 2014 the term "lead free" will mean—

- (A) not containing more than 0.2 percent lead when used with respect to solder and flux; and
- (B) not more than a **weighted average of 0.25 percent lead** when used with respect to the wetted surfaces of pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings, and fixtures.

While the deadline is approximately 19 months away, water utilities need to take steps much sooner in order to ensure their inventory of distribution system components such as pipes, pipe fittings, meters, valves, etc. is compliant by January 4, 2014 or sooner.

EPA is still developing regulations to implement P.L. 111-380. Revisions included in the Long-Term Lead and Copper Rule (LT-LCR) will address this issue, but the LT-LCR is not scheduled to be finalized until 2015, which falls after the January 4, 2014 lead-free compliance deadline. In the interim, water systems will need to take a number of steps including using the somewhat confusing wording of P.L. 111-380 as a guide:

1. Establish procurement processes,
2. Develop inventory control mechanisms,
3. Adopt maintenance practices,
4. Prepare installation and construction specifications, and
5. Effect internal controls.

To help utilities better understand this new lead-free definition and comply with this new regulatory requirement, a forum is being held at the AWWA Annual Conference on Monday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, from 3:45-5:00p.m. in Room D164 of the Dallas Convention Center. Speakers from EPA, NSF, and various manufacturers will summarize their efforts to assist utilities with compliance, and open discussion will be encouraged.

If you have any questions about this new lead-free definition and potential compliance implications, please contact Steve Via in AWWA's Washington, DC office at [svia@awwa.org](mailto:svia@awwa.org).

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