

News and Press Releases



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 6, 2011

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NSF International Supports New Lead-Free Definition and Regulations for Plumbing Products

Federal legislation now consistent with NSF Drinking Water Standards to help protect consumers from lead exposure

ANN ARBOR, Mich. – NSF International, an independent public health organization that tests and certifies a wide range of plumbing and drinking water treatment products, strongly supports the passage of the *Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act* on January 4th, which significantly reduces the amount of lead allowed in plumbing products that contact drinking water.

NSF International applauds the government for harmonizing federal legislation with recently enacted state requirements and NSF Standards. In 2008, Annex G was incorporated into NSF/ANSI Standard 61: *Drinking Water System Components -- Health Effects* and includes requirements limiting weighted average of lead content in plumbing products to 0.25 percent, the same as required by this new federal legislation. This legislation (to take effect January 4, 2014) now makes the federal law consistent with California lead-free legislation passed in 2006, amends the Safe Drinking Water Act's definition of lead-free and limits the maximum content of lead in plumbing devices so it's consistent with the lead content requirements of NSF Standards.

Plumbing devices already certified to NSF Standard 61, Annex G fully comply with the lead-content requirements of this newly passed Act. A list of compliant products can be found on [NSF's website](#).

“We applaud Congress and the Administration for taking this long-awaited step to harmonize this requirement across the country, which will help protect the public from exposure to lead in their drinking water,” said Bob Ferguson, NSF International Vice President of Water Systems. “We are pleased that the new national requirement for lead in plumbing devices will be equivalent to the requirements in NSF/ANSI national standards. NSF is prepared to support this effort and help address this growing public health concern by continuing to test and certify drinking water products that conform to these new lead-free requirements.”

NSF has developed several standards that limit the amount of lead and other contaminants that can migrate from water contact materials into water. In 1988, the EPA replaced its own Drinking Water Additives evaluation program with NSF standards that were developed, in part, with EPA funding. Most states and public utilities require manufacturers making products that come into contact with water to have them tested to verify they meet NSF's national standards.

Products covered in NSF/ANSI Standard 61 include: pipes and related products; protective and barrier materials (including cements/coatings); joining and sealing materials (including gaskets, adhesives, lubricants); process media (including carbon, sand, zeolite, ion exchange media); mechanical devices (including water meters, in-line valves, filters, process equipment); mechanical plumbing devices (faucets, drinking fountains, and components); and potable water materials (non-metallic materials).

For more information on Annex G and NSF/ANSI Standard 61, visit [NSF's website](#). For more information on NSF/ANSI Standard 61 requirements or NSF testing and certification services to the standard, contact Pete Greiner at 734.769.5517 or greinerp@nsf.org. A copy of Annex G as adopted in NSF/ANSI 61 – 2008 is available on [NSF's Web site](#).

A new standard, NSF/ANSI 372: *Drinking Water System Components -- Lead Content*, has recently been adopted, which contains the procedures to verify the lead content of drinking water products. This standard is referenced in Annex G of NSF/ANSI 61 as the methodology to determine lead content compliance. Products certified to NSF/ANSI 372 demonstrate compliance with lead content requirements only while certifications to NSF/ANSI 61 Annex G demonstrate compliance with both lead content and lead leaching requirements.

Consumers can visit [NSF International's website](#) for additional information on how to protect their families from lead.

About NSF International's Water Systems Programs: NSF International developed the American national public health standards for all chemicals used to treat drinking water and materials/products coming into contact with drinking water. In 1988, the U.S. EPA replaced its own drinking water programs with these NSF standards, which are now the national standards for drinking water. NSF International is accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

- NSF/ANSI Standard 60: *Drinking Water Treatment Chemicals* is the nationally-recognized health effects standard for chemicals used to treat drinking water.
- NSF/ANSI Standard 61: *Drinking Water System Components* is the nationally-recognized health effects standard for all devices, components and materials that come in contact with drinking water.

NSF tests/certifies products ranging from municipal water systems to home plumbing including: chemicals, pipes, fittings, valves, faucets, showers, toilets, etc. Consumers can look for the NSF Mark on these products to make sure they have been tested and certified.

NSF also certifies water filtration systems such as absorption filters (carbon, charcoal and ceramic), reverse osmosis systems, distillation systems, ultraviolet disinfection products, shower filters and water softeners. The NSF Drinking Water Treatment Units laboratory performs over 1,000 tests every year in support of the 6,000 water treatment products currently certified by NSF. For a list of certified drinking water treatment products, visit [NSF's website](#).

About NSF International: NSF International, an independent, not-for-profit organization, certifies products and writes standards for food, water and consumer goods to minimize adverse health effects and protect the environment (www.nsf.org). Founded in 1944, NSF is committed to protecting human health and safety worldwide and operates in more than 120 countries. NSF is a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Food and Water Safety and Indoor Environment.

NSF International developed NSF/ANSI Standard 61, Annex G – *Weighted Average Lead Content Evaluation Procedure to a 0.25 Percent Lead Requirement* – based on state legislation to help protect the public from exposure to lead by mandating a maximum weighted average lead content of ≤ 0.25 percent in products which come into contact with drinking water.

Additional services include Education and Training, safety audits for the food and water industries, dietary and nutritional supplement certification, management systems registrations (e.g. ISO 14001) delivered through NSF International Strategic Registrations and sustainable business services through NSF Sustainability.

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Editor's Note: NSF Vice President Bob Ferguson is available to discuss lead in more detail. To arrange an interview, please contact Greta Houlahan at 734-913-5723 or houlahan@nsf.org.

