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MEMORANDUM

TO: Plumbing Subcode Officials

FROM: Edward M. Smith 
Director
Division of Codes and Standards

DATE: February 24, 2014

SUBJECT: Lead Free Fixtures and Piping

The Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act (P.L. 111-380) is a federal law, enacted on January 4, 2011, that amends the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 USC 300g-6) by setting new, lower standards for the amount of lead allowed in plumbing products that come into contact with potable (drinkable) water. This change reduces the permissible levels of lead in the wetted surfaces of pipe, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings and fixtures to a weighted average of not more than 0.25 percent. For solder and flux, the limit remains 0.2 percent lead. The amendments also address the method for calculating lead content. Products that meet this standard are defined in the law as "lead free."

This law became effective on January 4, 2014. It is anticipated that the 2015 edition of the National Standard Plumbing Code will address this issue. However, since the federal law is in effect, local code officials should begin enforcing this requirement now. All pipe, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings and fixtures used in potable water systems should comply with this new requirement.

There are resources available on the International Code Council website that may be helpful in the identification of compliant fixtures and piping. The links are provided below for your convenience. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Thomas Pitcherello in our Code Assistance Unit at (609) 984-7607.

c: Construction Officials

This site has examples of product markings:

<http://www.iccsafe.org/cs/PMG/Documents/GetTheLeadOut.pdf>

Under "Lead in Plumbing Products," this site has information on the new federal requirements:

<http://www.iccsafe.org/cs/PMG/Pages/default.aspx>

