

Water Filter Treatment Systems for Reducing Lead

There are several types of water filter treatment systems that can be used to remove lead. Water filters can be found at your local home improvement store, hardware store, grocery store, online, or at your local drug store. There are several manufacturers of these types of systems.

It is important to purchase a filter system that is certified to meet **NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for reducing lead in drinking water** and **NSF/ANSI 42 Standard for particulate reduction (Class I)**. If purchasing a reverse osmosis system, make sure it meets the **NSF/ANSI Standard 58** or **WQA S-300 for lead reduction**. Look for one of these symbols on the packaging and make sure it states that it meets the standards listed above.

To confirm if a system you are considering purchasing is certified for lead reduction, see the following websites:

NSF International – www.nsf.org/info/leadfiltrationguide

Water Quality Association – wqa.org/find-products#

International Association of Plumbing & Mechanical Officials – pld.iapmo.org

See “EPA consumer guide to water treatment systems” under “For more information” on the back of this fact sheet for additional certification bodies’ listings and symbols you can look for.



Types of Filter Treatment Systems

The following types of filter treatment systems remove lead from drinking water. **Note:** All these systems require regular replacement of filters according to the manufacturers recommendations. It is important to change your water filter regularly to ensure the filters continue to reduce lead.

Pour-through pitcher filters – Water drips through a filter in a water pitcher. A water pitcher filter is inexpensive, easy to use, and can be readily found at stores. However, the water filters slowly and the pitcher may need to be refilled often. Approximate cost: \$20–\$40.



Faucet mount filters – These filters are mounted on a kitchen faucet. The filter uses a diverter to direct water through a filter. (See fact sheet on “How to Buy and Install a Faucet Water Filter.”) A faucet filter is relatively inexpensive, easy to install and use, and readily found in stores, and allows the user to switch between filtered and unfiltered water easily. However, these filters do not fit all faucet designs and filtered water may flow more slowly. Approximate cost: \$20–\$30.

Counter-top filters connected to sink faucet – These filter systems connect to your faucet through a hose/tubing. This type of filter allows you to switch between filtered and unfiltered water easily and eliminates the bulk of having a filter on your faucet. They are slightly more expensive than faucet filters and take up counter space. These filters are not as readily found in stores but can be ordered through home improvement stores or online. Approximate cost: \$70–\$150.



Counter-top filters that dispense to a pitcher or dispenser – These filter systems sit on the counter and are filled manually like the pitcher filters but are electrically powered to filter the water faster. They are priced similar to counter-top filters connected to the sink faucet but take up more counter space. These are also not as readily found in stores but can be ordered through home improvement stores or online. Approximate cost: \$60–\$150.



Plumbed-in filters to separate tap – These filter systems are installed under a sink. The filtered water is dispensed through a separate faucet installed on your kitchen sink. These can filter large amounts of water and do not take up counterspace but can be expensive and require modifications to plumbing. Approximate cost: \$100+ (not including plumbing cost if needed).

Plumbed-in filters to your faucet – These filter systems are installed under a sink and the filtered water is dispensed through your existing faucet. These filters do not take up counterspace but can be expensive and require modifications to plumbing. Approximate cost: \$100+ (not including plumbing cost if needed).

Refrigerator filter – This type of filter is installed in your refrigerator and typically dispensed through the refrigerator door. You must select a filter that works with your refrigerator model. These systems only work with refrigerators designed to dispense water or water and ice. Refrigerator filters are readily found at home improvement stores and online. Approximate cost: \$50.



Reverse osmosis treatment systems – These systems connect to your plumbing under the sink and use a membrane filter to reduce lead. A reverse osmosis system can also reduce mineral and total dissolved solids. Select a reverse osmosis system that is certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 58 or WQA S-300 for lead reduction. These systems are installed under a sink and dispense water through a separate faucet. These systems can be readily found at home improvement stores and online, can filter large amounts of water, and do not take up counterspace but can be expensive and require modifications to plumbing. Approximate cost: \$200–\$400 (not including plumbing cost if needed).

More Information

Call or email the Ohio Department of Health at 1-877-LEADSAF (1-877-532-3723) or lead.testing@odh.ohio.gov with any questions.

Additional information on water treatment methods that you can use to reduce lead in your water can be found on the following websites:

EPA consumer guide to water treatment systems – www.epa.gov/water-research/consumer-tool-identifying-pou-drinking-water-filters-certified-reduce-lead

EPA home water treatment guide – www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/home-drinking-water-filtration-fact-sheet

NSF lead in drinking water information – www.nsf.org/knowledge-library/lead-in-drinking-water

NSF consumer water filter guide – www.nsf.org/info/leadfiltrationguide

This NSF consumer water filter guide provides information on water filters that have been tested and certified by NSF International to reduce lead in drinking water. This guide also explains the NSF standards and how NSF International verifies a filter's ability to reduce lead in drinking water. The guide lists the water filters certified by NSF International for lead reduction along with the proper replacement cartridge that should be used with each system. It includes information about the different types of NSF certified water filtration systems to help consumers know which system best fits their home or business. The guide also includes information about the importance of replacing filter cartridges and explains NSF International's testing and certification process.