Lead in WAPA St. Croix Drinking Water

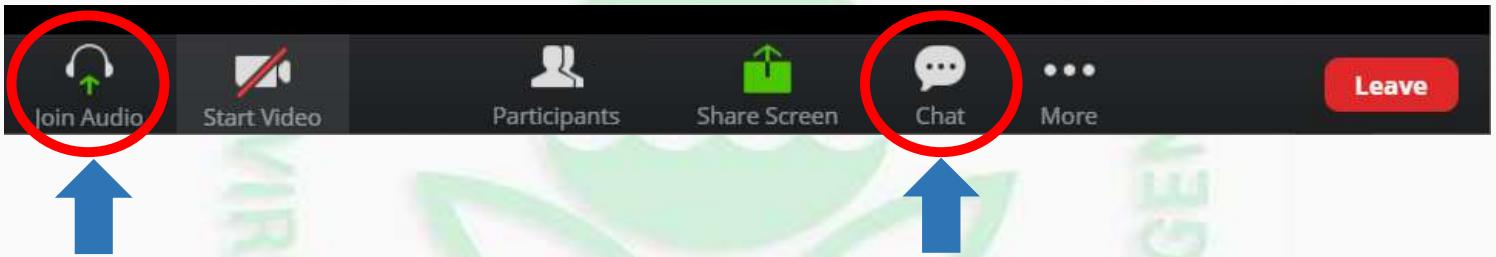
Virtual Public Meeting

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. AST

December 13, 2023

Zoom Tool Bar

Should you have questions or comments during the presentation, please use the chat box. During the Q&A portion of the meeting, you will be able to unmute.



Click the “Join Audio” icon on your screen and select an audio source.

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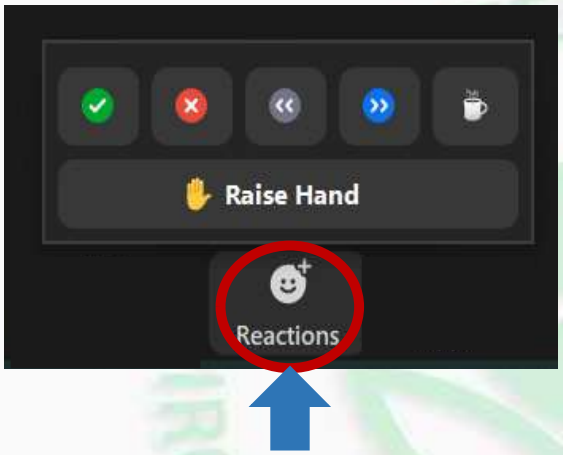
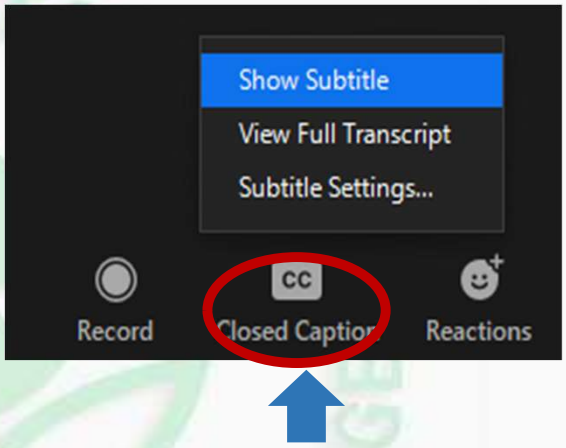


Raise your hand using the "Reactions" box so that you can be placed in queue to ask your question aloud



Closed Captioning is available by clicking on the CC icon.

Agenda

- Opening Remarks
- EPA Sequential Sampling Study
  - Results
  - Next Steps
  - Recommendations for Residents
- WAPA
- DOH
- Q & A

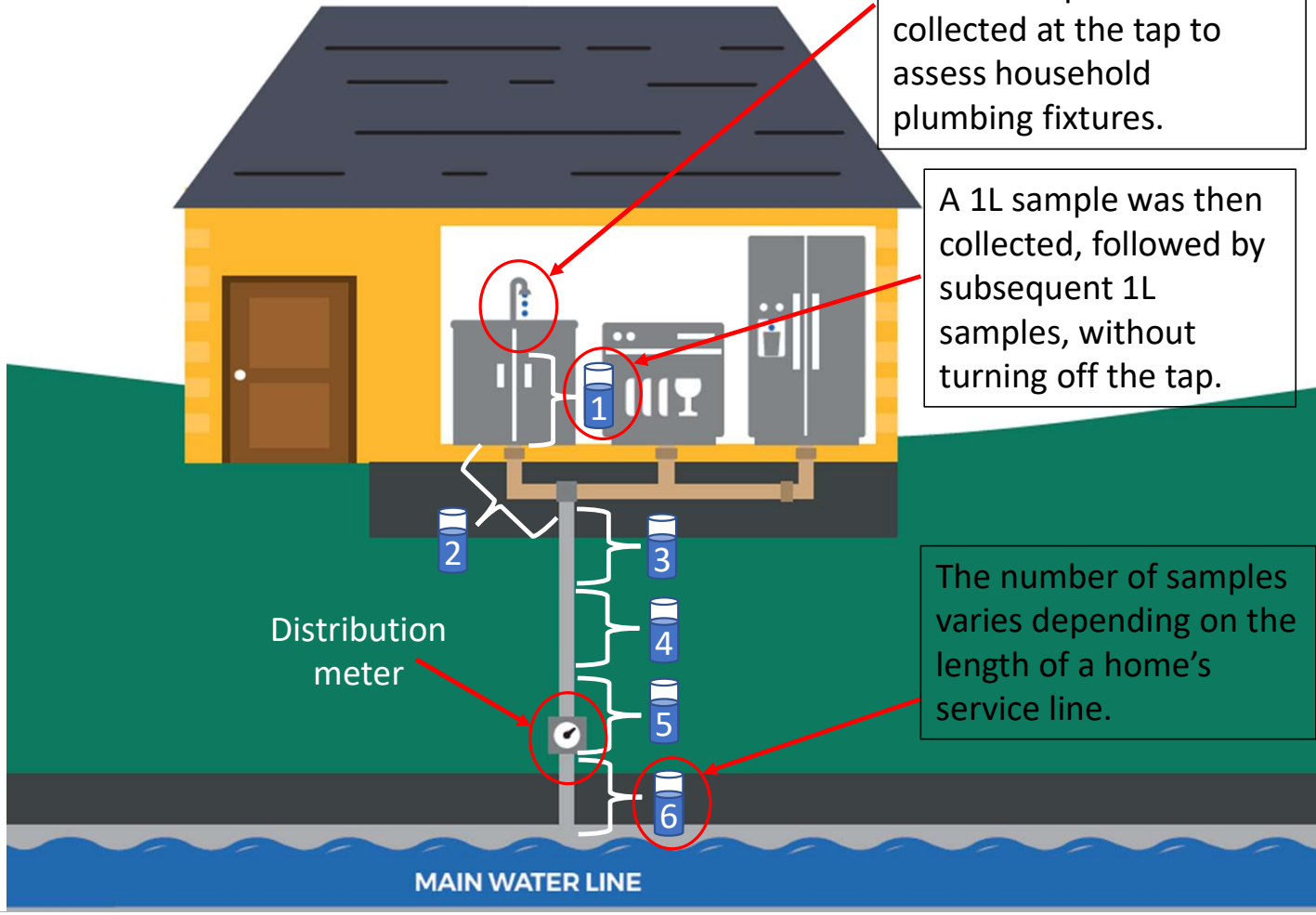
Sequential Sampling

What is sequential sampling?

- A set of samples, collected one right after another, that captures all of the water in the plumbing from the kitchen tap to the water main.
- Each sample is associated with a part of the plumbing and is analyzed for lead and other contaminants.
- Higher lead levels in certain samples identify the location of a potential source.

**Note: Drawing not to scale, nor an accurate representation of the homes that were sampled.*

125mL = ~2.5ft of ½ " pipe
1L = ~20 ft



Sequential Sampling Study

Results

- 119 samples collected at 11 homes
- 3 samples exceeded EPA's 15 ppb lead action level:
  - 2 samples at 2 household taps (28.8 ppb, 18.4 ppb)
    - Lead from household plumbing
    - 6.5 to 22-hour stagnation
  - 1 sample at 1 household tap (23.2 ppb) from around the distribution meter
    - Lead from plumbing components in and around the distribution meter
    - 96-hour stagnation

Conclusions

- Very high levels of lead are not reaching household taps under normal use.
  - Longer periods of stagnation increase lead in drinking water.
- The primary source of lead in the distribution system are lead-containing plumbing components (e.g., brass fixtures)
  - There is also lead in household plumbing
- **The corrosivity of the treated drinking water is causing lead to leach from lead-containing plumbing components throughout the distribution system, including, for example, household plumbing and distribution meters.**

Next Steps

- EPA requests that the USVI develop an outreach and education plan for WAPA customers on steps residents can take to protect themselves, before the “do not drink” recommendation is lifted.

- EPA supports USVI’s longer term actions, some of which are already being implemented, to address lead, including:
  - Evaluating and expanding Lead and Copper Rule compliance sampling
  - Removing lead-containing components in the distribution system
  - Assessing and optimizing WAPA’s corrosion control treatment
  - Developing a flushing program to prevent stagnant water

Recommendations for Residents

- Before consuming water after 6-8 hours of stagnation, flush your pipes by running your tap (e.g., doing dishes, doing laundry, taking a shower/bath)
- Clean faucet aerators
- Use only cold water from the tap for consumption (e.g., preparing food, washing dishes)
- Properly use and maintain a filter certified to remove lead
- Install lead-free household plumbing