

Is there lead in my drinking water?






BC drinking water is lead free when it leaves the treatment plant

Drinking water in British Columbia is safe and clean when it leaves the water treatment plant.

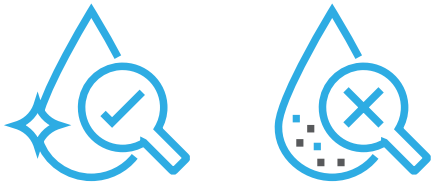
In some situations, water may come into contact with lead after treatment. This may happen in the service lines—the pipes that connect homes to the water main under the road—or in homes with older plumbing fixtures that contain lead or lead solder.

As a homeowner, you are responsible for ensuring your plumbing doesn't create a drinking water health hazard

Here's what you can do if you think there might be lead in your drinking water:

-  Get your drinking water tested at the tap by your municipal treatment plant operator or an accredited lab
-  Run taps until the water turns cold when you haven't used water overnight or for several hours
-  Filter drinking water with a CSA or NSF certified lead filter

If necessary, you may need to replace service lines and plumbing fixtures.



Keeping drinking water safe is everyone's responsibility

Reducing and eliminating lead in drinking water requires municipal treatment plant operators, water suppliers, health authorities and homeowners work together to ensure clean, safe drinking water.

The issue of who is responsible for lead in drinking water is complex, since lead may come from municipally owned service lines or the service lines and fixtures contained within private property. While water suppliers own the water supply system, property owners own the service lines and plumbing on their own property.

The long-term goal is to eliminate lead from Canada's water system by replacing all lead service lines and household plumbing that contains lead or lead solder.



Ask your municipal treatment plant operator or your local water supplier if testing is required in your area.

Lead is a health hazard

Exposure to lead can be hazardous to people's health. Even low levels of lead have been shown to harm the cognitive development, behaviour, size and hearing of infants and children.

The degree of harm from lead exposure depends on frequency, duration and amount of the exposure to lead from all sources including air, soil, dust, food and water.

While water can be a significant source of lead, there is no evidence that drinking water in BC is a significant source of dietary lead intake.



Do you have questions about lead and drinking water?

Contact your water supplier at:

The BC Water & Waste Association (BCWWA) is a not-for-profit organization that represents over 4,000 water professionals who are responsible for ensuring safe, sustainable and secure water, sewer and stormwater systems in BC and the Yukon.

www.bcwwa.org

