



**City of Charlottetown
Water and Sewer Utility**

Notice to Our Customers

Drinking Water - Minimize Your Intake of Lead

Lead in your Drinking water

- Lead is a common, naturally occurring metal found throughout the environment.
- Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion or wearing away of materials containing lead that are in the water distribution system and household plumbing.
- Drinking water is rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning.
- The most common sources of lead in drinking water are lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, faucets made of brass and chrome-plated brass, and in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect a home to the water main (service lines).
- Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells, and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children, pregnant women, and developing fetuses. Amounts of lead that won't hurt adults can slow down normal mental and physical development of growing bodies.

While Charlottetown's drinking water exceeds Health Canada's standards, residents in older homes can reduce the amount of lead they drink even further by following a few simple practices.

Helpful hints

If you're concerned about lead in your drinking water, you can take several steps to limit possible exposure.

Flush your pipes

- It may take several hours for lead to dissolve into your drinking water. This means that the first water drawn from the tap in the morning or after a period of non-use can contain higher levels of lead.
- Flush standing water in your pipes each morning by first flushing the toilet, washing your hands, showering or letting the water run for five minutes or until it is cold to the touch. Flushing clears water from the plumbing and home service line to ensure the drinking water comes from the main, where lead is rarely present. Conserve water by catching water used for flushing and using it for watering plants or for washing dishes

- Flushing the tap may not be effective in reducing lead levels in highrise buildings. If you are concerned about lead in the drinking water, talk to your landlord or consult your local health department about ways to minimize exposure.

Cold Water for Drinking and Cooking

- Use only cold water for drinking, cooking or preparing baby formula. Hot water dissolves more lead from plumbing. Boiling water DOES NOT remove lead.

Check your Plumbing

- A licensed plumber can determine if a home contains lead solder, lead pipes or pipe fittings that contain lead. A plumber can also determine if a home has a lead service line connecting home plumbing to the community water system's water main. The presence of these materials does not mean lead is in the water, but that the potential for lead in the water exists.
- Make sure that repairs to copper piping do not use lead solder.

In-House Water Treatment Devices

- Some home treatment devices remove lead, but not all do. Before purchasing a home treatment device, check the manufacturer's claims. A good resource is NSF International.

Electrical Grounding

- Have your household wiring checked to see if grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes. Corrosion may be increased by this procedure. Check with a licensed electrician or your local electrical code to determine if your wiring can be grounded elsewhere.

Consult your Family Doctor

- Consult with your family doctor or pediatrician to receive a blood test for lead and learn more about the health effects associated with exposure.

What the City is doing to replace lead service pipes.

Charlottetown has an annual water system replacement program, which includes lead service pipe replacement. This program aims to upgrade and replace aging water systems, which over time will also remove all known lead service connections (from the watermain to the residential property lines) from its distribution system.

The typical construction period is from mid May to November and replacements of the City's services are scheduled during this time of the year. Financial constraints and inclement weather may impact this schedule.

What the property owner can do to replace lead service pipes.

Property owner's who have confirmed their service pipe is lead can make arrangements to replace the service pipe between the property line and the building serviced.

Replacement of the property owner's service pipe is at their expense and is to be completed by a contractor or plumber hired by the property owner.

The property owner is to have the service replacement inspected by the Charlottetown Water and Sewer Utility when being completed. An application for the inspection is to be made to the Utility.