

Helpline FAQs

HOW DO I KNOW IF THERE IS LEAD IN MY WATER?

As water sits in pipes over time, lead can be leached into the water if the plumbing contains lead or lead solder. Some homes may have a lead service line (the pipe that connects a house to a watermain) if it was installed before 1975. If you are unsure of the age of your service line or its material, it is best to contact your municipality or water utility to confirm. If you are not on a municipal system, contact a licensed laboratory to submit a water sample for lead analysis.

HOW CAN I MITIGATE LEAD EXPOSURE?

If your home has a lead service line, the best permanent solution is to have it replaced. Usually, service lines are part-owned by the home owner and the municipality. Home owners should work in conjunction with their municipality to replace both sections at the same time.

If you suspect you have lead plumbing or fittings, you can reduce exposure by doing the following:

- Fully flush out pipes by running taps each morning (or when water has not been used in a few hours) for as long as needed to get fresh water from the watermain through the house before using it for consumption. Shorter flushes can be used when the water hasn't been standing as long.
- Only use cold water for consumption (drinking or cooking) as hot water increases the leaching of metals.
- Inspect and clean out aerators on taps monthly.
- Replace any brass fittings/faucets that are not certified lead-free.
- Install a certified point-of-use filter as a short-term measure if needed. Test the water for lead before and after to confirm the filter is working.



MORE INFORMATION

The following links provide resources for consumers who are interested in learning more:

[What about lead? Fact Sheet >](#)

[Water Talk - lead in drinking water >](#)

[How to identify lead-free certification marks on drinking water systems and plumbing >](#)

[Labs licensed to test for lead >](#)

[NSF certified water filter systems for lead reduction >](#)

[How to clean your faucet aerator >](#)

For further inquiries regarding lead exposure, please contact the following parties as appropriate:

Contact your [local Public Health Unit](#) for more information on lead exposure, private water sampling or for a list of licensed plumbing inspectors.

Contact [the Ministry of Environment](#) if you own a school or child care centre and have questions about lead.



Image source: Michigan Radio