

Keeping BC's drinking water lead free is everyone's responsibility

By working together, water suppliers and homeowners can reduce and eliminate lead in drinking water

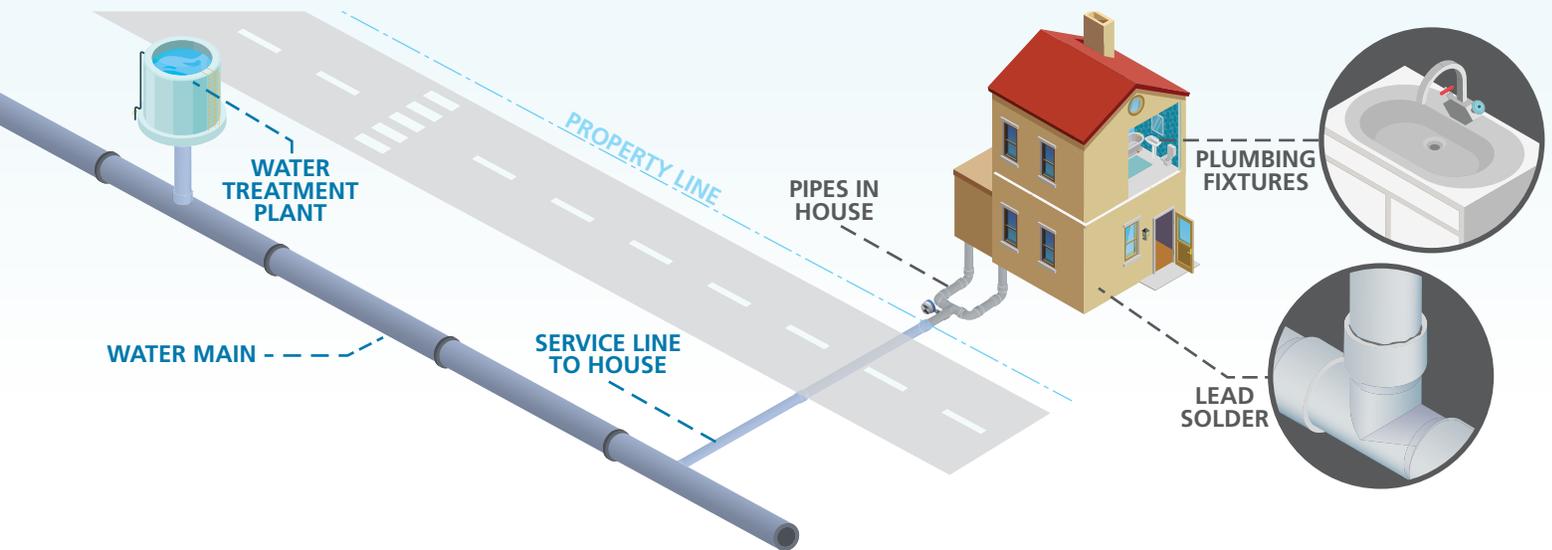
BC's drinking water is clean and safe when it leaves the water treatment plant.



Water may come into contact with lead in pipes that connect homes or buildings to the water main under the road or in older pipes and plumbing fixtures inside the home. Older pipes and plumbing fixtures may contain lead or lead solder that can leach into drinking water.



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



What can you do to reduce exposure to lead?

If you think there is lead, here are some steps you can take:

WATER SUPPLIERS:

- Work with home and property owners to sample and test water at the tap
- If necessary, adjust the chemistry of water leaving the treatment plant to minimize its reaction with lead in older service lines or plumbing fixtures (corrosion control treatment)
- Educate homeowners about the steps they can take

Under the BC Drinking Water Protection Act, water suppliers in BC are responsible for monitoring the water they deliver. In Canada, the acceptable level for lead is 0.005 mg/L, based on a sample of water taken at the tap.

HOMEOWNERS:

- Run taps until the water runs cold when you haven't used water overnight or for a full day
- Filter drinking water with a CSA or NSF certified lead filter
- Get your water tested by your municipality or an accredited lab
- Stay informed. Talk to your water suppliers

Under the BC Public Health Act, the owners of private properties are responsible for ensuring their plumbing does not create a drinking water hazard. That means testing, flushing, and if necessary, replacing service lines and plumbing fixtures.

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