

Lead in Drinking Water

Information for Water Users in Areas of Brandon with Lead Service Lines

Issued by the Medical Officer of Health for Prairie Mountain Health in collaboration with the Province of Manitoba's Office of Drinking Water and the City of Brandon

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On-going testing of homes with lead water service connections in Brandon shows that lead levels in drinking water can be high. In some of these homes, lead in drinking water levels remained above the current Guideline for Canadian Drinking Water Quality level of 0.005 milligrams per litre (mg/L) even after flushing the water. Unflushed samples can have much higher levels of lead.

It is important that you, as the property owner/occupant, understand that Brandon's drinking water is treated at the city's water treatment plant and meets the provincial standard for lead when it leaves the plant; however, water can pick up lead particles if it passes through other connections containing lead once it leaves the treatment plant. These connections can include lead water service lines or other household plumbing.

This information is being provided to remind water users that lead water service connections continue to be in place in some areas of Brandon, and to advise on the steps to be taken to reduce the chance of consuming drinking water with elevated lead levels. **Children, infants, and pregnant persons are the most sensitive to lead exposure.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Confirm whether or not you have a lead service line

- If your home was built before 1950, you **may** have a lead water service connection.
- Review the enclosed map from the City of Brandon on where lead water service connections **may** exist.
- If the water line coming into your home to the water meter is a silver-grey color, it may be a lead water service connection.
- **If you are unsure about whether you have a lead water service connection in your home, contact a certified plumber or the City of Brandon's Lead Water Services Information Line at 204-729-2214.**
- Lead water service connections usually create the highest lead levels but older brass plumbing fixtures or leaded solder within the home may increase drinking water lead levels.

2. Test your tap water for lead

- Any resident of the City of Brandon who is concerned or curious about lead concentrations in their tap water can participate in Brandon's volunteer sample testing program.
- Contact the Water Treatment Plant at 204-729-2190 or a.howe@brandon.ca to make arrangements. City staff can come to your property and sample, or staff can drop off and pick up completed testing kits with instructions for you to do the sampling.
- The City will ship the samples to ALS Environmental Labs for testing. When test results come in the City will send them to you.
- For more information on how to voluntarily have your drinking water tested for lead concentrations, you can call 204-729-2190 or visit the City of Brandon's Lead Water Services Information page: <https://www.brandon.ca/watertreatment/lead-water-services-information>

3. Take steps to reduce lead levels at the tap

- Use cold water from the cold water tap for cooking and drinking.
- Clean the aerator regularly on taps used for drinking water to remove any particles that may be caught there.
- Avoid drinking tap water that has been sitting in the lead service line or plumbing system for a long time (ex: overnight or during the workday). Flush the toilet, take a shower or do a load of laundry first thing in the morning or after work to clear water from the service line; then run the tap until the water is cold to clear water from the plumbing. Fill a container with cold fresh water and keep it in the fridge for drinking and cooking.
- If lead levels at the tap are above the national guideline of 0.005 mg/L, install a point-of-use treatment device (filter) that is NSF certified for lead removal on the tap used for drinking and cooking or use bottled water for drinking and cooking. For information on filters, please visit:
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/infographic-finding-drinking-water-filter.html>, OR
 - www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/water/drinking_water/quickguide_reducing_lead_exposure.pdf
- For information on preparing infant formula, please visit: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/lead/docs/infant-formula-factsheet.pdf>
- All residents can take steps to reduce their exposure to lead at the drinking water tap regardless of whether they have a lead service line by following the above methods.

4. City of Brandon Lead Water Filter Rebate Program

The City of Brandon will provide a one-time rebate of **up to \$250** to assist eligible property owners/occupants in the purchase of an NSF/ANSI-53 certified water filter or replacement filter cartridges for lead removal. Rebate application must be received by the City of Brandon before December 15, 2024.

- Rebates will ONLY be issued following:
 - Confirmation of a lead service connection, OR confirmation of test results which show lead at levels higher than the national drinking water guidelines of 0.005 milligrams per litre (mg/L); and
 - Original receipt of purchase of an NSF/ANSI-53 certified water filter; and
 - Original filter packaging; and
 - Proof via digital photo showing the system installed/in proper use; and
 - Completed application form provided by the City of Brandon.
- Residents who have already undertaken water testing through the City of Brandon's water testing program and have received test results showing lead at levels higher than the national drinking water standards will automatically be eligible to apply for the water filter rebate.
- For more information on this rebate program, contact the City of Brandon:
 - By phone: 204-729-2214 (Lead Water Services Information Line)
 - By email: engineering@brandon.ca, or
 - By filling out an online application:
https://www.brandon.ca/images/pdf/engineering/2024_Water_Filter_Rebate_Program.pdf

5. Replace your lead service line

The best way to reduce lead concentration at the tap is to replace your lead service line. Contact the City of Brandon's Lead Water Services Information Line at 204-729-2214 to enquire about the current lead service line replacement cost-sharing program offered by the City of Brandon.

More information about the City of Brandon programming relating to lead water service connections can be found on the City of Brandon website at: <https://www.brandon.ca/watertreatment/lead-water-services-information>



For information on the health impacts of lead in drinking water, please visit the Province of Manitoba's Lead in Manitoba Water Supplies Fact Sheet online:

https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/water/drinking_water/rld_homechildcare.pdf

For health-related questions, call Health Links Info Santé at 204-788-8200 (toll free at 1-888-315-9257) or speak with your health care provider. For general information on lead please visit:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/lead/index.html>