

Alberta Environment and Parks – Lead Sampling Program



The Town has compiled this list of common questions. If you have additional questions or concerns, please see the contact information at the top of this page.

What is lead?

- Lead is a substance that is naturally found in soil, food, and air. Lead has many industrial uses and has been used in plumbing and water service lines since the late 1880s. Lead can leach into drinking water from lead service lines and plumbing, but most humans are exposed from other sources.

What is a safe and acceptable level of lead?

- In March 2019, Health Canada published a new lead limit for the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality which lowered the level to a maximum acceptable concentration of 5 micrograms per liter (0.005mg/L) or 5 parts per billion.
- Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality can be found at:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/guidelines-canadian-drinking-water-quality-guideline-technical-document-lead.html>

Should I be concerned about lead in my water?

- The Town of Raymond has closely monitored infrastructure for more than 40 years since lead pipes were banned under the national building code. Findings indicate no general problems with the water provided from the treatment plant of any underground piping system.
- The Town of Raymond tests for lead in the distribution system in accordance with provincial requirements.
- Lead testing is regulated, and test results have consistently shown that the lead content within the Town's water distribution system is well below the limit established by provincial legislation.

Does the Town of Raymond have Lead Water Mains?

The Town of Raymond does not have any lead mains and maintain accurate records of when all of Town mains were installed and what their composition is.

Why does the Town of Raymond want to come into my home to take a water sample for lead?

- With the changes made in March 2019, from Health Canada, the point of compliance for lead is at the customer's tap and no longer in the distribution system upstream from the service connection point or property line.

How will the sample be taken?

- The water sample will be taken by Ridge Water Services Commission Operators from a cold-water tap. The sample collected must come from a line that has been stagnant for 6 to 8 hours (overnight) to be optimal in identifying peak lead levels.
- Samples will be collected in a sample bottle without removing the aerator or screen or disinfecting the tap.

Who is eligible for the lead sampling program?

- Any home built before 1975 is eligible for the program within the Town.

Why are only some residents being contacted for water samples due to lead?

- Under the requirements from Alberta Environment and Park, the Town of Raymond is required to sample a total of 40 residences throughout the Town.
- Those targeted are areas believed to be where lead would most likely be present, homes or buildings constructed before 1975. Prior to this time copper was a premium material and lead was a common substitute.

How does the lead sampling program work?

- Interested homeowners will register for the program.
- The Town will contact program participants to set up a time in the early morning to come and gather the sample prior to the use of any water in the residence.
- Town of Raymond employees will comply with all Covid protocols and ensure they are following public health measures when entering the residence.
- Results will be shared independently with each resident owner through mail.
- Should additional samples be required you may be contacted, and an appointment will be scheduled.

Simple actions to reduce exposure to lead from drinking water:

- Flush out your pipes before consuming the water.
 - Has water been sitting in your pipes for several hours? – Run the tap until its cold (about one minute) before drinking or cooking with the water from that tap.
 - Only use cold tap water for drinking or cooking since hot water increases the leaching of lead and other metals from your plumbing.
- Clean your taps monthly.

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- Every month, inspect the aerators or screens at the tap.
 - If you find debris, clean it out- this will remove any particles that may contain lead, and inspect more frequently.
 - If you do not find debris, continue to inspect monthly.
- Replace brass fittings.
 - Brass faucets and valves can contain some lead. These can be replaced with fittings that are certified to the standard on low lead content.
- A household water filter at the tap can effectively remove lead from your water.
 - Recommended as a temporary solution.
 - The filter must be installed and maintained properly, or it could become ineffective.
 - Test your water for lead before installation and during use to confirm the filter is working.
 - Make sure that any device you purchase is certified to the NSF International standard for removal of lead.

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