

Lead Reduction Program FAQ's

Definitions

Water service lines: The pipes that deliver treated drinking water from the City's water main to the private properties plumbing. The water service line includes all the pipe, valves and fittings from the water main, through the water meter, ending at the customer's interior plumbing.

City-side (City-owned) service line: The portion of the water service line is located on City-owned property, from the water main in the street to the boulevard/property line.

Private Service line: The portion of the water service line is located on private property, from the boulevard/property line to the homeowner's interior plumbing.

Lead service line: Water service lines that are entirely or partially made of lead, typically used in homes built before the mid-1950s.

Full-service line replacement: Replacement of both the City-owned and privately-owned portions of the water service lines.

Partial service line replacement: Replacement of either the City-owned or the privately-owned portion of the water service line; lead may remain on the portion of the water service line that is not replaced.

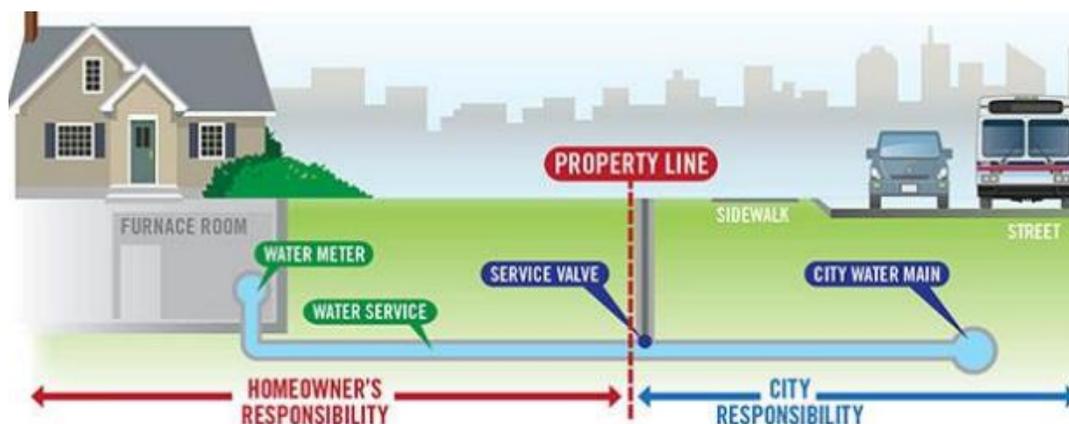


Photo courtesy to the City of Calgary Water Services

1. What is the purpose of the Lead Reduction Program?

Homes in Sarnia that were built before the mid-1950s are suspected to have been constructed with lead service lines. Through the free verification program, the City will collect data about how many lead lines there are in Sarnia and where they are located. With this information, the City will contact the properties with verified lead service lines to enroll in the replacement assistance program in which the City will cover the full cost of replacement with limited restoration costs and coordinate an independent contractor to complete the replacement.

2. What are the possible sources of lead in drinking water?

Sarnia's water contains little to no traces of lead once it leaves the water treatment plant. The main sources that may introduce lead into your drinking water are:

- Lead service lines carrying water from the water main into your home, both private and publicly owned.
- Internal plumbing lines.
- Solder containing lead.
- Fixtures such as taps.

3. Does my home have a lead service line?

The City of Sarnia has defined a "Suspected Lead Zone" based on the time period that the infrastructure was developed. The primary "Suspected Lead Zone" is bounded by Murphy Road and the St. Clair River (east to west) and Highway 402 to St. Andrew St (north to south). The secondary "Suspected Lead Zone" includes properties by Lakeshore Road. Homes in this area are suspected to have a lead service line and it is recommended that a sample is collected (free of charge).

4. What if I have a lead service line?

If you think that you may have a lead service line and your property is in the suspected lead zone, contact the City of Sarnia to have a sample collected (Phone: 519-332-0330 ext. 2232, Email: leadreduction@sarnia.ca). If the City confirms the presence of lead, the City will contact and encourage you to enroll in the replacement program in which the City will cover the full cost of replacement with limited restoration costs and coordinate an independent contractor to complete the replacement. You may also be eligible for participation in the Filter Rebate program (see PDF labelled "Lead Reduction Filter Rebate Program") until a replacement is completed.

5. Who is most at risk?

Lead in drinking water is a health concern for children who are six years old and younger, pregnant women, women who are planning a pregnancy, and the elderly. Lambton Public Health has more information and documents on the effects of lead on these individuals (see "Lead in Drinking Water Fact Sheet").

6. Who is responsible for replacing lead service lines?

If the service line from the water main to the property line is made of lead, it is the City's responsibility to replace it. If the service line from the property line into the home is made of lead, it is the homeowner's responsibility to replace it. In order to assist homeowners in replacing the lead service lines, the City launched a replacement assistance program in which the City will cover the full cost of replacement with limited restoration costs and coordinate an independent contractor to complete the replacement.

7. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, how is the City altering their sampling procedures?

In previous years, City employees would enter the home, with the homeowner in attendance, and take the water sample from the kitchen tap. In 2022, we plan to sample from a tap on the outside of the home, City employees will follow all COVID-19 safety measures, sanitizing taps both before and after we touch them, to do our part in preventing the spread of the virus.