

# Lead in Drinking Water

## NEW HEALTH CANADA LEAD GUIDELINE

In March 2019, Health Canada reduced its maximum acceptable concentration (MAC) for lead in drinking water from 10 µg/L (micrograms per Litre) to 5 µg/L.

In addition to reducing the MAC of lead, the new guideline recognizes lead exposure from all sources (not just drinking water) and shifted the point of compliance so that lead testing will now take place at the tap of a residence or building.

EPCOR, the water service provider for Red Deer County, works around the clock to provide you with high quality water. EPCOR and the County have a plan in place to determine lead levels and devise an approach based on results to ensure we meet the new guideline and Alberta Environment & Parks' requirements.

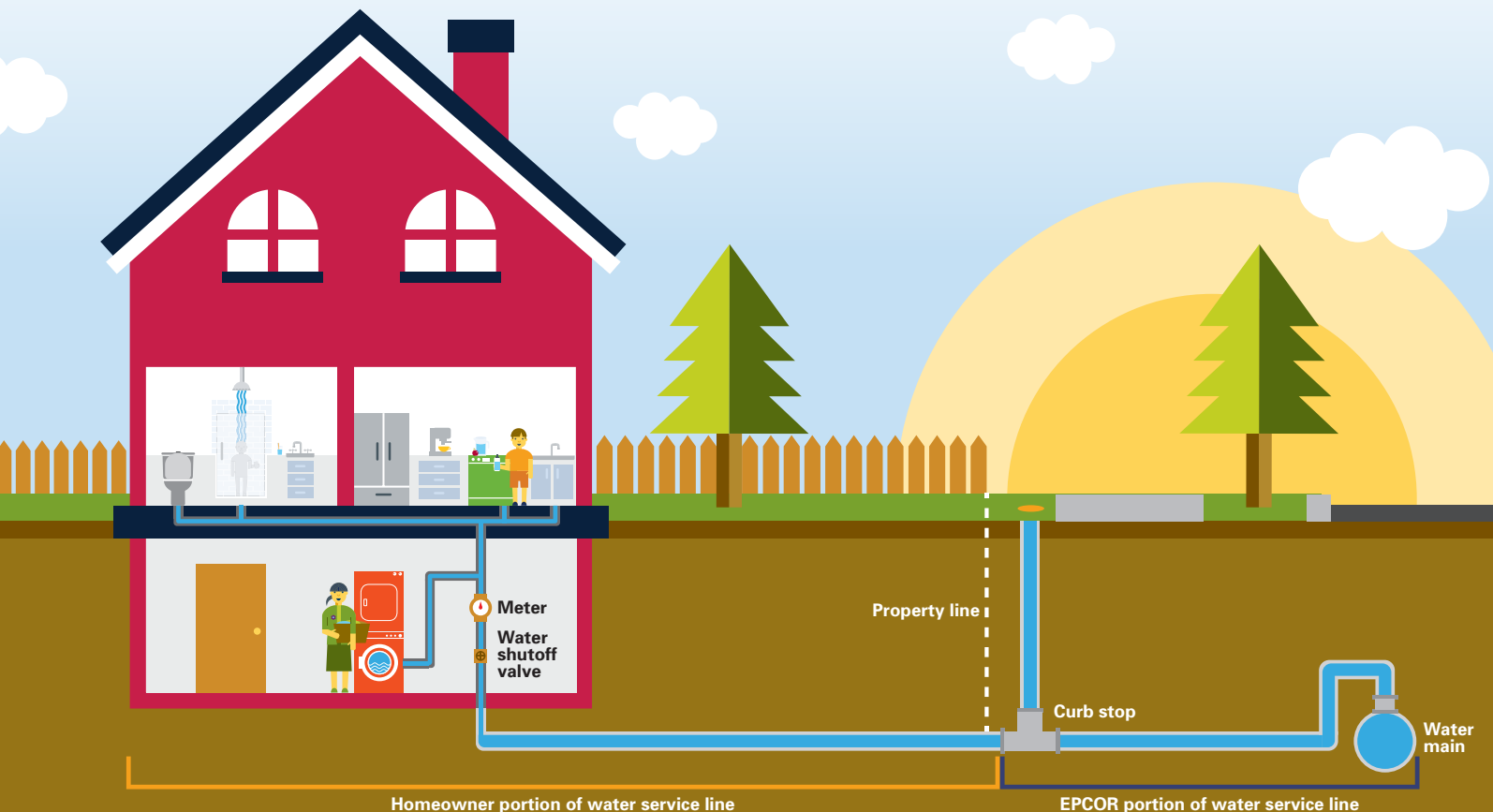
## WATER QUALITY IN RED DEER COUNTY

Water quality in the County continues to be safe to drink. The drinking water in Red Deer County continues to meet the Health Canada Guideline standards for lead levels while it is in the distribution system prior to entering your home or business. But lead may be found in tap water in homes that have lead pipes or if it's present in lead plumbing and fixtures inside your home.

## SOURCES OF LEAD

Lead is a naturally occurring metal. Prior to 1960, lead was a material available to homebuilders for water lines. Today, the preferred materials are copper and plastic. The most common sources of lead in drinking water are:

- Lead water service lines (the homeowner's portion, the utility's portion or both); or
- Household plumbing, such as old solder, brass plumbing fixtures and lead deposits in plumbing systems.



## IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Follow these steps to check for a lead service line:

1. Find your emergency water shut-off valve

The emergency water shut-off valve or water meter is usually located in your basement.

2. Check the colour of the pipe coming out of the ground and into the meter. You may have to lightly sand the surface. If the pipe is:

- The colour of a Canadian penny: It's copper.
- Bright blue or black: It's likely plastic tubing (polyethylene). Important: Don't attempt to test the hardness of your pipe if you suspect it's plastic.
- Grey: It's galvanized iron or lead.

3. Check the pipe hardness

If you think your water service line could be lead, try gently etching into the pipe. Lead is a relatively soft metal and scratches easily.

Follow good water quality tips:

- Consume water from your cold taps instead of your hot tap. Then heat it up if needed.
- Run your cold water tap for at least three minutes any time you haven't used the water for six or more hours, if you will be drinking or cooking with it.

- Purchase an in-home water filter that is "NSF-53 Certified for lead reduction in drinking water" for your potable water from any home improvement retailer.
- Consider other filtration options shown below.

### CONTACT US

If you suspect you have lead after confirming the age of your home and checking the material of your pipe, please contact EPCOR at 403-350-2161.

## Water Filtration Options

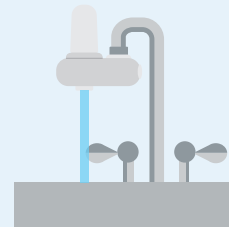
### Filtered Water Pitcher



**COST:** \$

**FILTER type:** Activated Carbon (NSF-53 certified)  
**LIFESPAN:** 2-3 months

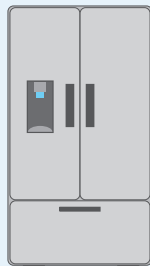
### Tap-Mount Unit



**COST:** \$\$

**FILTER type:** Activated Carbon (NSF-53 certified)  
**LIFESPAN:** 2-3 months

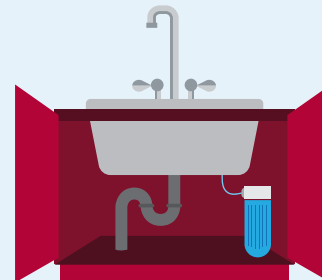
### Fridge Water-Dispenser Unit



**COST:** \$

**FILTER type:** Activated Carbon (NSF-53 certified)  
**LIFESPAN:** 6-12 months

### Under-the-Counter Unit



**COST:** \$\$\$\$

**FILTER type:** Activated Carbon (NSF-53 certified)  
**LIFESPAN:** 6-12 months