

## Other Sources of Lead

Along with water, lead may be present in paint and dust.

## Lead Paint

Before 1960, most paints contained substantial amounts of lead. It was not until 1976 that it was law for indoor paint not to contain lead. Some outdoor paints may still contain lead, however, a warning on the packaging will be present if it contains lead. Flaking paint is a potential source since children may eat the flakes of paint.

## Lead Dust

Lead is very common in the environment, particularly in soil. It can be carried inside a house on shoes, creating lead dust. Babies and young children, have close contact to the floor and tend to put objects and fingers in their mouth. Be sure to clean and vacuum on a regular basis to reduce the amount of dust that may contain lead in your environment. Dust with a wet cloth instead of a dry cloth to reduce the amount of dust that can become airborne and then breathed in

## Contact Information:

**Algoma Public Health**  
Environmental Health  
(705) 759-5286  
Toll-Free: 1-866-892-0172

Parent Child Info Line  
541-7101  
Toll Free: 1-888-537-5741

[www.algomapublichealth.com](http://www.algomapublichealth.com)

**PUC Services**  
759-6500  
[www.ssmruc.com](http://www.ssmruc.com)

Health Canada  
[www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

Ministry of the Environment  
942-6354  
[www.ene.gov.on.ca](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca)

If you want to take your own water sample, please visit Algoma Public Health's website for a list of labs.

If you test your drinking water,  
and the result is **greater than 10 ppb**,  
please advise  
Algoma Public Health at  
(705) 759-5286.

## What you need to know about Drinking Water and Lead



## Why am I receiving this information?

Higher than expected levels of lead were recently found in tap water samples in older, London Ontario homes. As a result, the Province ordered testing of drinking water in homes in 36 municipalities in Ontario, including Sault Ste. Marie.



## Why Sample for Lead in Drinking Water?

Homes that were built before the mid-1950's may have water service piping containing lead. Also, lead solder was used in copper plumbing in homes built before 1990. Over time, the lead leaches out of the pipes and solder, into the water. Knowledge of sampling results will help you make responsible decisions about using your water.

### Acceptable Levels

The Ontario Drinking Water Standard prescribes a maximum lead concentration of 10 parts per billion (ppb) in drinking water.

19 out of 20 Sault Ste. Marie homes tested in 2007 met the Standard. One test exceeded this standard by 1 ppb.

*Sault Ste. Marie has excellent sources of drinking water. No lead was detected in water sampled in Sault Ste. Marie water distribution mains.*

## Effects of Lead

Lead can affect the neurological development of the developing fetus and young children.

Children under 6 years of age are still developing and can absorb lead easier than older children and adults, this makes them more sensitive to the effects of lead.

Pregnant women can pass lead to their fetus through their blood. Children under 6 years of age and pregnant women should drink water that is filtered to remove lead, if lead concentrations are greater than 10 ppb.

## Do you live in an older home?

The Ministry of the Environment recommends **flushing the cold-water tap for at least 5-minutes** prior to using the water for drinking or cooking, if the water has not been used for 6 hours.. Only cold water should be used for drinking or food preparation. Clean tap aerators on a regular basis.

If you have a lead water service or if lead in your tap-water exceeds 10 ppb, have a filtration system installed that is NSF certified for removing lead, or use another water source **if you have children under six or pregnant women in the house**. Make sure the filtration system is properly maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions.



## What is PUC doing?

1) It is PUC policy to replace lead services up to property line when they are found during construction or repair activities. Owners are advised if PUC observes lead service on their property and the owner may replace this portion at their cost.

2) PUC is reviewing records of lead services. If records indicate the possibility of lead water pipe servicing your home, we will notify you in the coming weeks, and may ask you to participate in a water testing program at no cost to you. Lead water service pipes were installed over 60 years ago.

Records pertaining to their location may not be complete or accurate. PUC does not have record of plumbing type on private property. If you believe your service pipe may be lead, you should consult a licensed plumber.

3) If you have a lead water service, PUC will arrange to replace piping up to the property line and coordinate work with whomever the property owner has selected to replace the section of piping on your property.

4) PUC is committed to following Ministry of Environment sampling requirements, and meeting Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standards. For information about our on-going water quality monitoring program, please visit our website at [www.smpuc.com](http://www.smpuc.com). As new sampling programs are developed in the coming weeks, we may contact you to request a water sample from your home.

