



St. Lawrence County Public Health Department

80 State Highway 310, Suite 2 ■ Canton, New York 13617-1476

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Get the Lead Out - Determining if Your Home has a Lead Water Service Line

Canton, NY —

Lead is a naturally occurring element that is toxic to humans and is especially harmful to young children. Once poisoned, the effect of lead is often irreversible and can damage the brain and nervous system, slow growth and development, and cause learning and behavioral issues. There is no safe level of lead exposure.

Before the dangers of lead poisoning were well understood, lead was added to some materials including paint, gasoline, and plumbing. Although the use of lead pipes was banned in the 1980s, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports there are 9 million lead service lines delivering water to families across the United States.

To reduce the amount of lead in drinking water, the EPA requires municipal water systems to provide an inventory of lead water service lines as part of its Lead and Copper Rule Improvements. Knowing where lead pipes are located is an important component of the additional proposed rules which would include 100% lead pipe replacement.

St. Lawrence County wants to ensure residents have clean, safe drinking water. Property owners can determine the type of service line in their home by using the following guidelines.

How to determine the type of water service line in your home:

- 1). Water service lines are typically found in the basement. Look for a pipe that comes through the outside wall of your home or the floor of your basement. It may have a meter or shut-off valve.
- 2). Carefully scratch the pipe (like you would a lottery ticket) with a key or coin. Do not use a knife or other sharp tool.
- 3). Place a magnet on the pipe.



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Lead Pipe:

- Magnet will not stick
- Scratched area is shiny silver

Galvanized Steel Pipe:

- Magnet will stick
- Scratched area is dull gray

Copper Pipe:

- Magnet will not stick
- Scratched area is copper

What to do if you have a lead service line:

- Reduce your exposure by installing a filter for water that you use for drinking and cooking.
- Only drink or cook with cold tap water. Water that comes out of the tap warm can have higher levels of lead. Boiling water will *not* reduce the amount of lead.
- Let the tap run for about 30 seconds to flush out sitting water.
- Consider using an alternative water source for drinking and cooking until the service line is replaced.

The inventory does not include properties relying on well water. However, property owners in rural areas that are not connected to a water system should still look at their plumbing to ensure it is free of lead.

Where to have your drinking water tested for lead:

The St. Lawrence County Soil & Water Conservation District, located at 1942 Old Dekalb Rd in Canton, has partnered with Endyne Labs for water testing. Residents can now pick up water testing bottles and instructions from Soil & Water and drop them off to be picked up and tested. Pick-ups are on the second Monday of each month. The next water pick up is scheduled for December 9th and must be dropped off between 7 am and 10 am on that day. For questions regarding testing kits and pricing, please contact Endyne Labs at 518- 563-1720. The Soil & Water Conservation District can be reached by telephone at 315-386-3582 for questions regarding bottle pick-up and drop-off

Additionally, Converse Laboratories 315-788-8388 located in Watertown offers water testing. Residents can reach out to the lab directly for further information on pricing and pick-up locations.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
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It is important to note Public Water Systems in New York actively monitor for more than 100 different contaminants, including lead, regularly and are required to report exceedances and notify the public. To date, there are no reported exceedances.

For questions or concerns about water service lines, please contact your local water system. For questions or concerns relating to possible lead poisoning, please contact the St. Lawrence County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 315-386-2325.

For further information:

https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-11/lcri-fact-sheet-for-the-public_final.pdf

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