

Corrosion Control Information Sheet

Prior to the mid-1950s, the service pipe delivering water from the street into each home and business was commonly made of lead. Lead was also used to solder pipes together before 1990, and can be found in leaded-brass fixtures, such as faucets and valves. As these items corrode or break down, they can cause lead concentrations in drinking water to increase. Lead can affect health and has the most impact on fetuses, infants and children under six years old.

The Ministry of the Environment, under the Community Lead Testing Program, introduced sampling and testing for lead in drinking water system plumbing in 2007 (O. Reg. 170/03). York Region and the City of Toronto participated in the lead sampling program. York Region and its local municipalities had excellent results and therefore have no requirement to implement a corrosion control plan. The City of Toronto is required and has prepared a plan to reduce lead in their drinking water systems.

To help provide a level of protection to all residents, in 2014, the City of Toronto will enhance its drinking water treatment process by adding phosphate. At an initial dose of three milligrams per litre (mg/L), phosphate will form a protective coating inside all pipes that will reduce the potential for lead to enter our tap water. This process is called corrosion control. Lead reduction in drinking water by corrosion control is approved by the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) under the *Safe Drinking Water Act*.

Treatment will start in the spring of 2014 at the R. L. Clark Water Treatment Plant in Etobicoke, with the City's other three water treatment plants being included by mid-year.

From the time of implementation, it will take up to two years for the phosphate to form the ideal level of protective coating throughout the city's entire network of

pipes. Following this period, York Region and Toronto Water will continuously monitor and adjust water treatment with a planned maintenance dose of one to two mg/L of phosphate.

The phosphate to be used in Toronto's water treatment process is a food-grade additive derived from a natural source of mineral rock. Phosphate is naturally present in food, such as milk, nuts and beef, and will have no impact on the taste or odour of our drinking water.

Prior to creating the Corrosion Control Plan, Toronto Water completed a comprehensive study to review the impact of lead corrosion on their drinking water. This included evaluating lead reduction strategies, such as lead pipe replacement and other corrosion control methods including pH adjustment. Toronto Water also completed an in-depth analysis of other municipalities that have implemented corrosion control measures, including Winnipeg, London, Chicago and Detroit.

Toronto's Corrosion Control Plan has been adopted by Toronto City Council and is supported and endorsed by Toronto Public Health as a safe way to reduce the amount of lead in tap water and the health risks associated with lead in drinking water. York Region Community and Health Services has reviewed the program and agrees with Toronto Public Health's endorsement.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Learn more about Toronto's plan and how corrosion control will help to reduce the potential for lead in tap water by visiting the City of Toronto's website: <http://ow.ly/u1gm4>

For more information on York Region water quality, please visit www.york.ca/drinkingwater