

Attention: Owners of Municipal and Non-Municipal Year-Round Residential Drinking Water Systems

Re: Release of Community Lead Testing Program: Round 2 (June 2008 – October 2008) Results

I am pleased to present the results of the Round 2 (summer 2008) Community Lead Testing Program. Under O. Reg. 170/03, owners of municipal residential and non-municipal year-round residential drinking water systems are required to sample for lead in plumbing and distribution locations twice per year. Based on the findings system owners may be required to undertake specific actions, including corrosion control.

This report contains a detailed analysis of the second round of community lead testing. During the sampling period of June 15th – October 15th, 2008, over 37,000 plumbing and 5,100 distribution samples were taken and submitted across the province.

A comparison of Round 1 (Dec 15th, 2007 – April 15th, 2008) and Round 2 has been carried out as part of an ongoing assessment of lead in drinking water across the province, and can be found in this report. The lead results between the two sampling rounds are comparable; however Round 2 did show overall improvements in sampling compliance.

The results from the summer 2008 sampling period indicated the following key findings:

The vast majority of plumbing and distribution results met the provincial standard:

- 96.9 per cent of all plumbing samples (water taken from pipes inside homes or buildings) met the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standard (ODWQS) of 10 micrograms per litre ($\mu\text{g/L}$).
- 98.7 per cent of all distribution samples (water taken from pipes leading to homes or buildings) met the standard.

The program has helped to identify communities with a pattern of lead exceedances:

- After two rounds of sampling, seventeen large municipal residential systems need to prepare a corrosion control plan (see Table 4 in the report). A corrosion control plan is required when a large municipal residential system reports a pattern of exceedances over several sampling rounds.

Lead results in Round 2 are comparable to Round 1:

- The average concentration of lead in plumbing for both Rounds 1 and 2 are comparable at 1.97 $\mu\text{g/L}$ and 1.86 $\mu\text{g/L}$, respectively.
- The percentage of systems that reported all plumbing sample results met the standard in Rounds 1 and 2 were also similar.

Volunteer Participation:

- The Community Lead Testing Program relies heavily on volunteers for sampling at residential and non-residential plumbing locations. The results in Round 2 suggest that the majority of municipal residential systems were able to obtain the required number of volunteers. Although some improvement has been realized, non-municipal residential systems continue to have difficulty meeting their sample submission requirements.
- The ministry is working with drinking water systems owners via education, outreach, and targeted inspections to share best practices for the recruitment and continued participation of volunteers in the Community Lead Program. In cases where sufficient volunteers could not be obtained, the system owner may apply to the ministry for full or partial relief from sampling requirements.

After two rounds of extensive testing, the program has begun to provide a solid base of information on lead in drinking water, as well as identify systems that are required to prepare plans to reduce lead exposure. As the program is built on discovering trends in lead over time, future sampling will continue and may identify additional systems that need to take action.

Providing safe drinking water is a shared responsibility, and the Ministry of the Environment will continue to work with system owners and operators on all aspects of the program. If you have any questions, please contact the ministry's Public Information Centre at 416-325-4000 or 1-800-565-4923 or by e-mail at picemail.moe@ontario.ca . Should you need additional information about lead in drinking water, see the ministry's Drinking Water Ontario website at www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater .



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