



Hamilton

Lynden Precautionary Drinking Water Advisory Lifted

Frequently Asked Questions

Background

- The Drinking Water Advisory was issued in September 2011 following a lab test result that indicated higher than allowable lead concentrations in water.
- A drinking water advisory is issued by the Medical Officer of Health when the public's water source is not safe. It is a preventative measure put in place to protect the health of the public from drinking water that may be contaminated.
- Following the completion of the new water treatment facility for the Lynden Municipal Water System in July 2020, the Drinking Water Advisory remained in place for a year to allow the City to demonstrate sustainable operation of the new treatment facility, conduct robust testing, and complete drinking water system flushing to ensure any residual lead in the water system was removed.
- After one year of operation of the new system with acceptable test results from the treatment facility and drinking water system, Public Health Services has the necessary data to consider removing the precautionary Drinking Water Advisory from Lynden.
- Lifting the Drinking Water Advisory means that the drinking water in Lynden is now safe to drink and use for cooking, making baby formula, etc., without the need for an NSF Standard #53 lead tap water filter.

When was the advisory officially lifted?

- The Medical Officer of Health lifted the advisory on August 5, 2021.

What took so long to lift the water advisory?

- Initially it wasn't clear where the lead in the drinking water system was originating from. Eventually it was discovered that the raw groundwater in Lynden has very low concentrations of naturally occurring lead, well below the Provincial maximum allowable concentration (MAC) of 0.0100 mg/L and typically undetectable. It was also discovered that the naturally occurring lead was precipitated in sediment during the former water treatment process.

Ultimately a new municipal well and water treatment system was required to eliminate the potential for lead accumulating in sediment, and to improve the City's ability to maintain the infrastructure. This work took several years during

which time multiple studies were completed, the new water treatment facility was constructed and commissioned, and robust maintenance was undertaken within the water system. The new water treatment facility was commissioned in July 2020, after which the system was operated for a full year to allow the City to demonstrate sustainable operation of the new treatment facility, conduct robust testing, and complete drinking water system flushing to ensure any residual lead in the water system was removed.

Is there any further action that residents need to take within their own household now that the advisory has been lifted such as flushing hot water tanks or appliances?

- No, there is no individual action residents needs to take.

What should we do with the faucet water filter now that we don't need it?

- The filters can be placed in the garbage.

How many households/ people are impacted by this change?

- Less than 200 homes and less than 400 people.

What was conducted that led to the correction of the situation?

- Drilled and tested 9 different potential municipal well locations in Lynden.
- Completed well site evaluations for potential municipal wells.
- Completed an Environmental Assessment for the identified new municipal well.
- Made NSF Standard #53 lead tap water filters available to Lynden residents at no cost.
- Installed 25 above ground post hydrants and 26 underground water valves throughout Lynden to support improved maintenance of the drinking water system.
- Conducted drinking water system flushing in 2019, 2020 and 2021 - The purpose of the flushing program was to remove any settled sediment from the watermains to improve and maintain water quality throughout the system.
- Completed continual sampling, testing and monitoring of the water quality.
- Constructed and commissioned a new municipal well and water treatment facility which began operation In July 2020, for an investment of over 7 million dollars.

How did the City notify residents of this change?

- PHS Medical Officer of Health issued a media release advising that the advisory has been lifted to Council and then media partners
- Direct door-to-door mailing to residents
- City of Hamilton website update
- Direct communication with ward 12 Councillor (Lloyd Ferguson)
- Posters hung in key locations in the community (at the Post Office, Library, etc.).