

Squamish DRINKING WATER everything you need to know

The District of Squamish is pleased to provide details about Squamish's drinking water source, monitoring and protection, and how to optimize its top quality in the home.

Water source and quality

Squamish is considered by Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) to have excellent water quality that's among the best in the region.

Where does our water come from?

- **Seven wells** at Powerhouse Springs are the primary source of potable water.
- **This groundwater** is drawn from the Ring Creek Aquifer and recharged primarily by rainwater seepage from Ring Creek and Skookum Creek.
- **Mashiter Creek** and **Stawamus River** are available as emergency backup water supplies.
- **Surface water** has not been required in recent years due to responsible summer water conservation efforts by the community.

Oversight and standards

How are water systems regulated in BC?

- **Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulations** (Province of British Columbia).
- **Permit to operate** issued by Vancouver Coastal Health.
- **Water quality** measured against the **Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality** (Health Canada).

How is our water treated and monitored?

- **Municipal water** is chlorinated for disinfection purposes to ensure the safety of the water.
- **Online chlorine analysers** are situated throughout the system to ensure optimum levels are maintained.
- **24 samples** per month are tested for E.coli & Total Coliforms.
 - **Annual Drinking Water Quality Reports** are available on the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority website via squamish.ca/water.
- **Bi-annual samples** are collected from the District's source water and tested for over 35 chemical and physical parameters to ensure quality is within Health Canada Guidelines.
 - Annual results are compiled and can be found on our website.

Key Facts

Squamish is fortunate to have very high quality groundwater.

Water is continuously monitored through an online system that alerts staff if water values change drastically.

Powerhouse Springs water measures within the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality for all parameters.

Learn More

For more information about drinking water, please visit:

squamish.ca/water

7 POWERHOUSE SPRINGS WELLS
Supply Squamish's drinking water.

20 SAMPLES MONTHLY
Tested for E.coli & Total Coliforms

Reports available on the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority website via squamish.ca/water.

35 CHEMICAL & PHYSICAL PARAMETERS TESTED
to ensure quality is within Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines

SQUAMISH
HARDWIRED for ADVENTURE



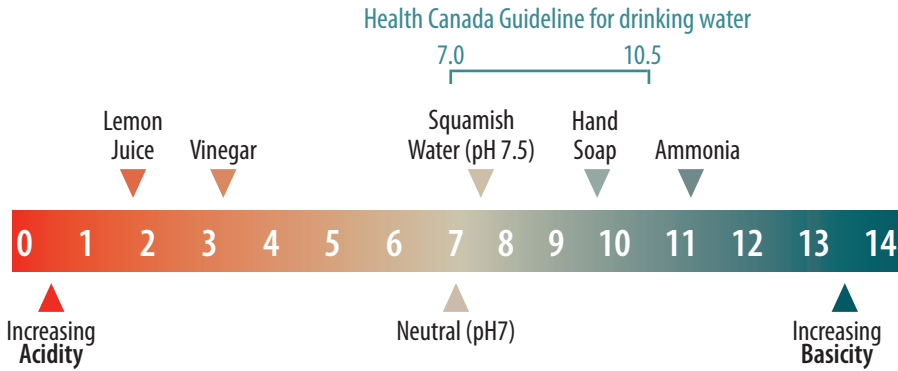
pH and guidelines

How does our water compare to other municipalities in BC?

- Coastal water is typically soft (low in hard mineral content) and has low pH.
- Low pH is common in many areas of B.C., North America and the world.

What is pH and how does it relate to corrosivity?

pH is a measure of the acidity/basicity of water.



The combination of a lower pH, low alkalinity, low hard mineral content (soft water), temperature and other factors can lead to corrosive properties in water.

Corrosive properties in water can draw out metals, including lead, **if left to sit for extended periods** (i.e. overnight or during the work day) in home or building's plumbing pipes or fixtures. This generally applies more to older fixtures and pipes in buildings.

Is the District of Squamish considering centralized treatment to our water to increase the alkalinity and hardness?

Adding chemical additives to the source water is expected to be met with varying opinions within the community, and may present new challenges in other areas. The District of Squamish is not considering treatment at this time, but this is a direction that needs to be explored further, with the guidance of VCH.



"Flush until cold" best practice

What is the guideline from VCH?

"Flush until cold" removes stagnant water sitting for several hours within a building's plumbing. This ensures that fresh water is being drawn to the tap from the municipal water supply, eliminating any concern of elevated metal levels in water.

Is flushing until cold wasteful of our drinking water?

- Flushing until cold generally does not take more than a minute for most homes.
 - Flushing the toilet first thing in the morning will help move water which reduces the time needed to flush the tap until cold.
 - Flushed tap water can be collected in watering cans to feed indoor plants and gardens. It can also be used for washing.
 - Water containers can also be stored in the fridge (after flushing until cold).
- **Boiling water will NOT remove lead.**



Protecting our water

How are we protecting our resource?

- A Well Protection Plan has been developed for the municipal water supply wells operating at the Powerhouse Springs well field.
- A Water Master Plan addresses Squamish's long-term supply strategy, and incorporates asset management and infrastructure renewal.
- A Water Conservation Plan has been developed.

How are we maintaining our infrastructure?

- Continuous monitoring of our water system.
- Uni-directional flushing program.
- Leak detection program.
- Cross Connection Control program.
- Watermain replacements and new infrastructure.
- Outdoor water use bylaw.

Key Facts

pH level of Squamish's water is typically 7.5.

In April 2016, Health Canada raised the operational guideline for pH to a range of 7.0 to 10.5.

"Flush until cold" ensures that you are consuming fresher water.

Did you know

There are over 145 kilometres of water lines in Squamish.

The District provided over 4.2 million cubic metres of potable water in 2017.

Learn More

For more information about drinking water, please visit:

squamish.ca/water

