



CITY OF  
*Lethbridge*

## **Water Emergency Ends Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why were we told to boil our water when it was safe?**

Boil water orders are issued to ensure the public health of our community when harmful bacteria may be present in our drinking water. As continued water monitoring has indicated that we are meeting water quality standards it is appropriate that the order be lifted. You may still notice a different taste or odour in your drinking water, but it is safe.

### **So there was no risk to the residents from the water?**

Due to amazing water conservation efforts from residents and businesses, the City of Lethbridge was able to prevent contamination of the water supply for Lethbridge, Lethbridge County, Picture Butte, Coaldale & Coalhurst.

### **How was this event different than in previous years?**

Recent melting and low temperatures created frozen ground before the snow fall and rapid melting. This prevented the dirt, silt and organic matter from soaking into the ground and rather made it directly over the ice and frozen ground into the river. The river feeds our water supply so we are hostage to what is in it!

### **When was the last time a boil water order in Lethbridge was issued?**

The last boil water order was in May 1996 due to high stream flows.

### **Was this due to faulty equipment or aging infrastructure?**

No.

### **What is the age of the water treatment plant?**

The water treatment plant was built in 1981. The plant is upgraded and equipment is replaced on a regular basis.

**How much water goes through the water treatment plant on a daily basis?**

55 million liters/day on average and up to a maximum of 120 million liters/day on a summer day

**What were the levels of our water storage during the emergency?**

The lowest this emergency situation came to was only 19 million liters/day. This is a very dangerous level as it impacts the ability for our community to fight fires if needed.

**Why do arenas and pools get closed during a water shortage event?**

In order to conserve water, pools and arenas close to conserve water so we save water by not using public showers and flooding ice surfaces.

**What communities do we supply water to?**

Lethbridge, Lethbridge County, Picture Butte, Coaldale and Coalhurst.

**Why did some car washes stay open or were slow to close?**

The City of Lethbridge by law regulation office contacted every car wash in the City by letter and in necessary cases made site visits to remind them of the need to conserve water.

**When did the City of Lethbridge start communicating about water conservation?**

Tuesday, March 11 at 7:00am, as soon as we were informed of the water crisis situation.

**What efforts did the City of Lethbridge take to conserve water as a corporation?**

All City of Lethbridge facilities reduced their water and boiled water as needed. Pools and arenas along with the Curling Rink were closed to conserve water by not using public showers and flooding ice surfaces. No transit buses were washed.