

Who is responsible for providing safe drinking water?

In Canada, each provincial and territorial government is responsible for drinking water provisions within their province or territory. Under safety legislation in Nova Scotia, the employer also has responsibilities to provide water for drinking and handwashing, that meets the standards set out in the latest version of the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality published by the Federal Department of Health.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/environmental-workplace-health/reports-publications/water-quality/guidelines-canadian-drinking-water-quality-summary-table.html> For more information on provincial guidelines, see: <https://www.novascotia.ca/nse/water/waterquality.asp>

How is water treated to make it safe for drinking?

Halifax Water operates three large state-of-the-art, ISO 14001 Certified, water supply plants and six modern smaller community supply plants to provide water to 360,000 customers throughout the Halifax Municipality. Operators at all Halifax Water's supply plants continuously monitor and adjust the treatment process to ensure the water output is of the highest possible quality.

What does the University test for?

The University tests water for lead content.

Why don't we test for other contaminants, such as bacteria?

We've consulted with an external company and they advise that since Halifax Water does weekly testing for contaminants, there is no need for the University to do so. It would be a duplication of effort.

Where can I find more information on what the City of Halifax tests for?

To ensure public health protection, Halifax Water uses what's called a "multiple-barrier approach." This is an integrated system that prevents or reduces the contamination of drinking water from the source, to the tap, and back to the source. It consists of a series of checks and balances. For more information see:

<https://www.halifaxwater.ca/protected-water-areas>

What water sources are tested on Campus?

All drinking fountains are tested and then other random sources across Campus.

Who does the testing?

An external company is hired to perform the testing.

How can I see the results?

The results will be shared with the JOHSC (Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee). Individual employees may contact Facilities Management at facilities.management@smu.ca, the OHS Office at Valerie.wadman@smu.ca, or your JOHSC representative .

Are there filters on University water sources?

All water fountains on Campus have filters.

How often are the filters changed?

Filters are changed every four months as per manufacturer's recommendations.

Are there legal requirements for filters on water fountains?

The NS Department of Environment has advised their regulations do not cover filters for water fountains. They advise to follow manufacturer's guidelines.