

# Lead, Water, and Wildlife



## What's wrong with lead?

Lead sinkers and shot accumulate on stream and lake beds. Over time, they are picked up by birds to grind food in their gizzard. Because lead is soft, it gets ground up and blended into the body. When a bird dies of lead poisoning, they become a poisoned carcass. Other animals or pets may feed on the carcass and become poisoned as well.

## Lead and humans:

Repeated exposure to lead in even in low doses is a human health hazard. Lead sinkers and shot may seem miniscule, but they remain and accumulate in the environment. This risks human exposure, soil contamination, and even groundwater contamination.

## Local impacts:

In 2019, an estimated 11 trumpeter swans died of lead poisoning at Sucker Lake in Vadnais Heights. This and other popular fishing spots are often hotspots for abandoned lead sinkers.



## What can we do?

Plan non-lead sinkers and shot into your gear. They are more expensive, but this protects swans, loons, eagles, and dozens of other birds from lead poisoning.



**Thank you for using the great outdoors responsibly:  
Choose non-lead gear.**

