

Identifying Service Line Material

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Understanding your Water Service Pipe



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on August 4, 2022 released guidance on conducting a lead service line inventory for compliance with the revised Lead and Copper Rule. The most common sources of lead in drinking water are lead pipes, and brass or bronze faucets and fixtures.

The City of Mount Carmel is in the process of updating its materials to reflect U.S. EPA's guidance. We will update any materials as we have more guidance.

Material Information

[NPR's interactive tool](#) can be checked out to discover if you have lead pipes in your home.

How to identify material of a service line can be a challenge: different pipe material and fittings were used during different decades. The materials available today were not necessarily used or available decades ago.

A service line is the pipe that connects the water main to the plumbing in a home or building. When any part of that pipe is made of lead, it is called a lead service line.

Lead service lines were installed primarily during the late 1800s through the 1940s.

Physically inspecting the piping is one approach. Service line pipes may be exposed where the pipe enters the home through the floor or basement or crawl space wall.

Inspecting the pipe at the water meter, or when discovered through excavating the dirt over the service line or water main.

Water lines are typically several inches below the depth that soil freezes, this means service lines are often 42 inches or more underground and sometimes much deeper. Our knowledge of service line materials is dependent on installation records, or subsequent recorded repairs.

While lead is visibly different from other metals routinely used for water pipes, test kits approved by EPA to test for lead paint can be used to test for lead on the surface of service lines. Information on lead testing resources are available at:

- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration: Lead Test Kits](#)
- [National Center for Healthy Housing: Lead Testing Kits](#)

If a pipe is painted, the lead kit will respond to the lead in paint. Be sure to confirm false negative test results using the "Test Confirmation Card" contained in the test kit.

Visual scratch testing



Lead is a dull gray color and very soft. If scraped with a key it will turn a bright silver color. Even a very strong magnet will not stick to lead.

Submit Water Service Line Material Survey

[Please follow link to submit survey](#)



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<p>Types of water pipes</p> <p>Follow the guidance below or contact a licensed plumber to determine the material of your water pipes. To identify the material of your service pipe material on private property, check your household water service connection, typically located in the basement.</p> <p>Homeowners should identify and replace old household pipes, particularly galvanized plumbing and sources of lead. The type of household plumbing can vary throughout your household.</p>	<p>Lead </p> <p>A dull, silver-gray color that is easily scratched with a coin. Use a magnet - strong magnets will not cling to lead pipes.</p> <p>Galvanized </p> <p>A dull, silver-gray color. Use a magnet - strong magnets will typically cling to galvanized pipes.</p> <p>Copper </p> <p>The color of a copper penny.</p> <p>Plastic </p> <p>White, rigid pipe that is joined to water supply piping with a clamp.</p>
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Directions

Address

Water Treatment Plant
119 S. Cherry Street
Mount Carmel, IL 62863
United States

[View in Google Maps](#)

38.4060779, -87.755136

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