

What Do Lead Service Lines Look Like?

Lead service lines are generally a dull gray color and are very soft. You can identify them easily by carefully scratching with a key. If the pipe is made of lead, the area you've scratched will turn a bright silver color.



Do not use a knife or other sharp instrument and take care not to puncture a hole in the pipe.

Note: Galvanized piping can also be dull gray in color. A strong magnet will typically cling to galvanized pipes, but will not cling to lead pipes.

Lead service lines can be connected to the residential plumbing using solder and have a characteristic solder "bulb" at the end, a compression fitting, or other connector made of galvanized iron or brass/bronze.



For additional information regarding improving your water quality, please contact DuPage County Department of Public Works/Water Division at (630) 964-7503.



DUPAGE COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS WATER DIVISION



Lead in Drinking Water



Could there be lead in your drinking water?

*Yes, there could be. The main sources of lead exposure for most children are lead-based paint, lead contaminated dust, and lead contaminated residential soil. Lead is rarely found in source water, but can enter tap water through corrosion of plumbing materials found in water services and premise plumbing systems. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fittings, fixtures, valves, meters, and solder. **Elevated lead levels may occur if water is left standing in the pipes for several hours, or if the piping was disturbed for repair work.***

Why is lead in water a problem?

Too much lead entering your body from drinking water can cause health issues, especially in children. Children 6 years old and younger are the most susceptible. The greatest risk is to infants (particularly if they are drinking formula prepared with tap water), young children, and pregnant women. The effects of lead have been linked to lower IQ's, and behavioral issues in children. Water that may contain lead would only be a danger if it is used for drinking or cooking. Human skin does not absorb lead in water.

How do I know if there is lead in my water?

The only way to know whether your water contains lead is to have it tested. You cannot see, taste or smell lead in drinking water. A laboratory certified by the Illinois EPA can be hired to analyze the water in your home. A list of those labs is available by contacting:

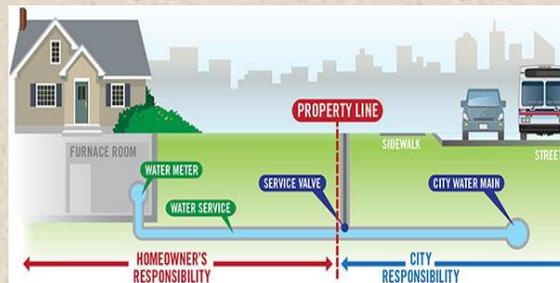
<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>, or by phone at (800) 426-4791.

When sampling drinking water, the water should be drawn from a bathroom or kitchen faucet that has not been used for at least 6 hours. Special containers are used to collect the samples. Contact a certified laboratory for sampling containers and instructions.

What can you do to reduce your exposure to lead?

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the current USEPA action level for lead in drinking water is 15 parts per billion (ppb). If your water has continually tested above that level, you may want to consider replacing your water service and/or plumbing system components that contain lead. If you have recently had work done on your plumbing system or water service that contains lead, you may want to do the following:

- ◆ Run COLD water to flush the system, for at least 3-5 minutes before using it to drink or cook. This will help flush water that may contain lead from the pipes.
- ◆ Use cold water for drinking, cooking, or preparing baby formula. Do not cook with or drink hot water from the tap. Lead dissolves more easily in hot water. Boiling the water will not reduce the lead.
- ◆ Routinely remove and clean the aerator from the faucet. While the aerator is off, run the water to flush any debris.



More information:

American Water Works Association (AWWA)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqFHrae92OM&feature=youtu.be>

USEPA www.epa.gov/lead

IDPH Lead Program

www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/environmental-health-protection/lead-poisoning-prevention

Drinking Water Watch

www.epa.illinois.gov/topics/drinking-water/index

Centers for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/

IL Section American Water Works Association

www.isawwa.org

Plumbing Manufacturers International

www.safep plumbing.org

Plumbing Council Midwest

www.plumbingcouncil.org

Illinois PHCC

www.ilphcc.com

PHCC National Association

www.phccweb.org/