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Customer Guide for Identifying Service Lines



What is a water service line?

A water service line is the pipe that connects the water main to your home or building inlet. Service lines may be made of copper or other materials such as galvanized iron or steel, plastic, brass, or lead. If any portion of the pipe is made of lead, it is called a lead service line (LSL).

Why is it important for me to check if my home has a lead or galvanized service line?

Lead is a toxin that poses serious health risks, and infants, young children, and pregnant people are particularly vulnerable to lead exposure. Lead service lines and plumbing materials (including solder, fixtures, and faucets) are the most common sources of lead in a home’s drinking water. For more information on the health effects of lead visit the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) website <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>.

Steps to check the materials of the service line.

The following steps will help you determine what the pipe in your home is made of.

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|  | 1. Find where your service line enters your home  * Find your water meter valve box cover between the road and your house. * Imagine a straight line from the meter to the center of your house. This is likely where your line enters your house. |
|  | 2. Find your service line   * The service line will enter the house at a point closest to the outside meter. * Typical inside locations include the basement, crawl space, or garage. |
| **White PVC pipes.** | 3. Identify your service line material  Plastic: The pipe is typically white or gray but can also be other colors. Plastic will not ring if tapped with a hard object like a coin or key. |
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| **A copper pipe next to a penny.** | Metal: To determine what type of metal pipe you have, perform a scratch test and a magnet test.  *Scratch Test:* Use a key or penny to gently scratch the pipe near where it enters through the wall or floor.  *Magnet Test:* Place a magnet on the pipe to see if it sticks.  Copper. If the scratched area is the same color as a penny with a shiny copper appearance, it is likely a copper pipe. If the magnet does not stick to the pipe, this further confirms that the pipe is copper. |
| **A silver/gray pipe.** | Galvanized iron or steel**.** If the pipe is silver or gray and hard to scratch and if a magnet sticks to the pipe, you may have galvanized iron or steel pipes. Sometimes these pipes may be painted. |
| **A pipe with a shiny scratch on it.** | * Lead**.** If a scratch test produces a shiny silver color and a magnet will not stick, your pipe is likely made of lead. |

Use the information provided here to complete your Service Line Material Form, which was mailed to each service address, or access the form online from the City’s webpage, http://townofcouleedam.org.