

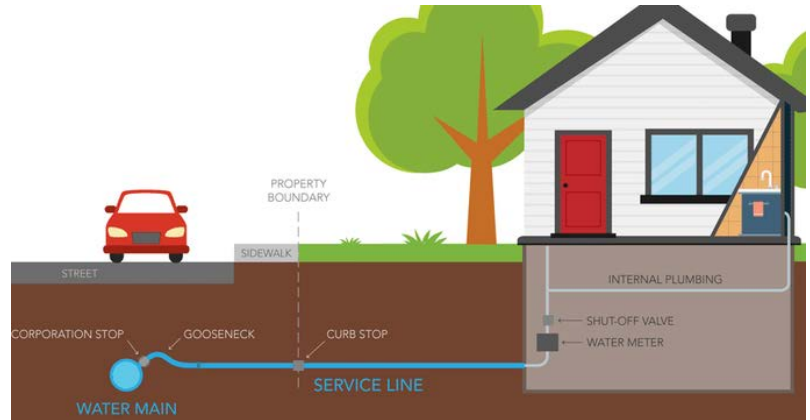
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about Lead Service Lines

There is no safe level of lead in the body. Lead can affect learning, mental health, and increase the risk of diseases later in life. Lead is especially dangerous to very young children when it is swallowed or breathed in. Lead has been used to make many products including paint, pipes and plumbing materials, ceramics and cosmetics. There is no lead in Milwaukee's drinking water when it leaves our treatment plants. But lead is often present in water because service lines and interior plumbing may contain lead.

What is a lead service line? Also known as LSL

The service line provides water from the water main in the street to the property. The utility owns the section from the main to the curb stop at the property line. The property owner owns the section from the curb stop to the water meter.

To reduce exposure to lead in drinking water, Milwaukee Code of Ordinances § 225-22.5 requires replacement of the lead service line with copper from the water main to the curb stop (city-owned) and from the curb stop to the meter (customer-owned) when:



- 1) a leak or failure is found on either the customer-owned section or the city-owned section of the lead service line **or**
- 2) when the city-owned section is replaced for any reason. This includes:
 - planned replacement of a water main that is connected to lead service lines. If such a project is planned in your area that would require a new connection to your service line, we will send you a written notice 45 days before the start of the work.
 - replacement of a lead service line serving a child care
 - a lead service line is severed or damaged by a contractor during a DPW street reconstruction or sewer main replacement project. DPW will notify MWW and MWW will coordinate with the property owner to replace both the customer-owned and city-owned sections of the lead service line with copper.

In all of these cases, the Milwaukee Water Works (MWW) immediately notifies a property owner replacing the lead service line is required.

- 3) when a property owner chooses to replace their customer-owned section of lead service line when it is NOT required, the city must replace its city-owned section of lead service line.

How do you know a service line is leaking? You will see water pooling on a sidewalk or in the street or soaking up through the lawn. If you see this, please call our 24-hour Control Center at (414) 286-3710.

I have a lead service line but it is not leaking. Must I replace it? No. But if you want to replace your section of the lead service line when it is not required, you must hire a licensed contractor, pay 100% of the cost, and the cost is not eligible for a cost-share or special assessment. Please obtain an estimate from a licensed plumber and notify our Lead Service Line Replacement Program at (414) 286-6304. The utility will then replace its section of the lead service line.

What do I have to do if I'm required to replace my lead service line? We will mail you a written notice and within 10 business days, city ordinance requires you to notify us that you do one of the following:

- Choose to have the city contractor replace your section of the lead service line. We will coordinate the project and pay all costs up front. **All property owners who use the city contractor are eligible for special assessment financing over 10 years to pay the cost to replace their section of the lead service line.**
- Or,

- Replace your section of the LSL by contracting with a licensed plumber. You pay the full cost to replace your section of the LSL while the utility pays to replace the city-owned section. The work must be performed in accordance with all applicable state, local and utility regulations. There is no cost-share or special assessment available.

A cost-share is available for properties with 1-4 dwelling units if the property owner chooses to use the city contractor to do the work. Currently, owners pay only \$1,843.00. The city pays the rest. The owner can pay their share as a special assessment over 10 years.

Replacement of the city-owned sections of LSLs are paid by MWW rate revenue because the section is utility property.

What if I take no action after receiving notification from the city that my lead service line must be replaced?

Milwaukee Code of Ordinances § 225-22.5 notes that failure to comply with an order to replace your lead service line may lead to citations of \$100 per day or discontinuation of water service if there is an imminent threat to public health or safety. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense.

Explain the special assessment financing.

After the work is completed by the city's contractor, the Department of Public Works (DPW) Special Assessment Office will mail the property owner a letter detailing the owner's cost which will be assessed to the property as a special assessment. The letter and a bill are usually mailed in October. These are the payment options:

- Pay the entire amount without interest to the City Treasurer within 45 days of the bill date.
- If the bill is not paid in full within 45 days of the bill date, the amount will be placed on the tax roll and interest will be charged on the unpaid principle.
- The interest rate, Prime + 1, is determined each July and will be fixed for the 10-year duration of the installment payments.
- Only work associated with the replacement of the LSL is eligible for the special assessment.

Ownership and maintenance requirements of the new service line from the curb stop to the meter remain the property owner's responsibility. The Milwaukee Water Works will continue to own the water meter.

How should I prepare for the replacement project? Can I stay in my home while the service line is replaced?

You may stay in the home during our work. We need access to the water meter so we ask you to move aside furniture, boxes, or anything blocking access to the meter. A lead service line usually takes one day. There may be a temporary water service interruption for a few hours, but workers will notify you in advance.

What happens during a lead service line replacement?

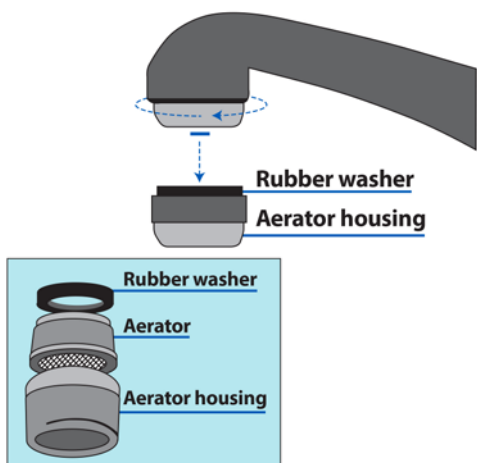
- You are required to allow our employees or contractor to enter your property to replace the lead service line from the outlet joint of the curb stop at the property line with copper pipe up to and including the meter setting in the basement.
- Generally, replacement of the LSL is conducted by excavating at the curb stop, pulling or boring new copper pipe through the route of the existing lead service line, penetrating through the basement wall or floor, installing a new meter setting including inlet and outlet valves, and connecting the meter setting to the building's internal plumbing.
- Generally, the excavation for the pulling/boring technique will be 6'x8' at the curb stop. If an open trench is used, the excavation will be about three feet wide from the curb stop to the foundation wall.
- Workers will make a hole in the basement floor or wall to accept the new copper service line.
- In the unlikely event the pulling or boring technique cannot be used workers will make an open cut excavation from the curb stop to the foundation wall in which copper pipe will be placed, penetrating through the basement wall or floor. Workers will install a new meter setting including inlet and outlet valves and connect the meter to the internal plumbing.
- The City and its contractors will restore the exterior work site to its pre-replacement condition as follows:
 - ✓ Restoration of the owner's side is limited to the excavation and impacted lawn areas.
 - ✓ Impacted lawn areas will be backfilled to include no less than 12" of topsoil at lawn excavations. Grass seed will be placed during the growing season.

- ✓ Private walks, trees, shrubs and landscaping are the responsibility of the owner.
- ✓ Extraordinary physical or other obstacles, such as porches, stairs, walls or fences, must be removed by and at the expense of the owner if the city determines that removal of the obstacle is necessary to perform the lead service line replacement.
- ✓ The hole in the wall or floor to accept the new copper service line will be patched.
- ✓ A temporary asphalt patch may be placed over the backfilled excavation in the street and public sidewalk until a permanent repair can be made.

Can I use my water during the service line replacement project?

Yes. For drinking and cooking from the cold-water tap, we will give you a filter pitcher that is NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified to remove lead. Non-filtered tap water can safely be used for bathing, washing hands, washing dishes, laundry, etc. These activities help flush the pipes. Lead is not absorbed through the skin, only by ingesting it by mouth.

- Fill the filter pitcher with cold water from the cold water tap only. Run the water until it is noticeably colder before filling the filter pitcher. Do not fill it from the hot water tap. Hot water dissolves lead more quickly.
- Use filtered water from only the cold water tap for drinking and cooking.
- Use filtered water from only the cold water tap to prepare baby formula, juice or other children's drinks.
- There is no need to use filtered water for household chores. Doing laundry, dishes, or cleaning with water from lead plumbing is safe.
- Always follow the manufacturer's guidelines to use and maintain the filter. Remember to regularly change the filter cartridges on filter systems regularly.



What should I do after the project is completed?

Flush your household plumbing at the end of each work day during active construction and when the project is completed:

1. Remove the screens/aerators from the end of every faucet and rinse any particles from them. Re-attach the screens.
2. Start in the basement or lowest level and work your way to the top floor. Fully open each cold water tap and allow the water to run.
3. Your water should be clear after 10 minutes. Start at the top floor and turn off the water at each faucet, finishing in the basement.
4. Re-attach screens/aerators to the faucets. The cost to flush four taps for 10 minutes is about 16 cents.

If the water is discolored, continue flushing until clear. If it is still discolored after 30 minutes, please call our Control Center, (414) 286-3710.

Not running the water for the recommended length of time may increase your risk of lead exposure.

Will replacement of the lead service line lower my risk of exposure to lead in drinking water?

Yes. But remember, only the lead service line up to the water meter will be replaced. It is possible sources of lead will remain in internal plumbing. You may want to hire a licensed plumber to replace lead pipes, lead solder on copper or galvanized plumbing, galvanized steel, and faucets and other fixtures.

Residents of buildings where lead service lines are present should adequately flush water lines after very long periods of not using it to reduce potential lead hazards, but the use of NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified lead filters is the best resource for lead-water safety.

At-risk populations of women and children living in buildings where lead service lines are present, including women who are pregnant, may become pregnant (women ages 15-45) or who are breastfeeding, and children up to the age of 6, should drink and cook only with water from the cold water tap that has been filtered with an NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified lead filter.



If using water directly from the faucet (without a filter), use only cold water from the cold water tap that has been well-flushed for at least three minutes. Not running your water for the recommended length of time may increase your risk of lead exposure.

Our contact information

- ❖ Lead Service Line Replacement Program (414) 286-6304
Milwaukee Water Works, 3850 N. 35th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53216
Fax (414) 286-8888 Email: LeadLineReplace@milwaukee.gov
- ❖ Milwaukee Water Works Customer Service (414) 286-2830
- ❖ Customer Service non-emergency email: watwebcs@milwaukee.gov
- ❖ Milwaukee Water Works 24-Hour Control Center (414) 286-3710

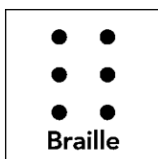
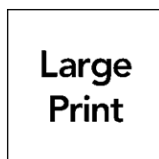
Milwaukee.gov/water Choose [Lead and Water](#)

[LeadSafeMke.com](#)

[Espanol.LeadSafeMKE.com](#)

For answers to questions about the health effects of lead exposure

- ❖ City of Milwaukee Health Department (414) 286-3521 or (414) 286-8800
- ❖ Milwaukee.gov/health



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