



Lead-Safe Milwaukee

SAFE PAINT SAFE WATER SAFE KIDS

Safe Water

Lead is still used to make many products including paint, pipes and plumbing materials, ceramics and cosmetics. Lead can be harmful to people, especially very young children, when it is swallowed or breathed in. There is no safe level of lead in the body.

Children under the age of 6 are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning because their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults, and their brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead. Babies and young children are more likely to swallow lead because they often put their hands and other objects that have lead from dust or soil into their mouths.

Pregnant women should be aware of lead hazards to prevent exposure to a developing baby.

Prevent childhood lead poisoning by keeping children from being exposed to lead and test your children for lead exposure. The only way to know if your child has been affected by lead is to get a blood lead test. If you are pregnant or you have a child under age 6, talk to a doctor about lead testing. All children in Milwaukee should be tested three times before age 3. Some children may need to be tested up to age 6.

For more information, visit LeadSafeMke.com

Milwaukee.gov/Health (414) 286-2165

Milwaukee.gov/Water (414) 286-2830

Drinking water safety

Lead is not found in Milwaukee's water after it is purified. Milwaukee water quality meets all federal and state guidelines. When lead is present in drinking water, it is usually because service lines and interior plumbing is made with lead.

Pipe solder, brass fixtures and/or faucets made before 2014 may contain lead. The lead can dissolve into the water when water sits in lead pipes for an extended period of time. To reduce this risk, Milwaukee adds food grade phosphate to the water. This forms a protective coating inside pipes.

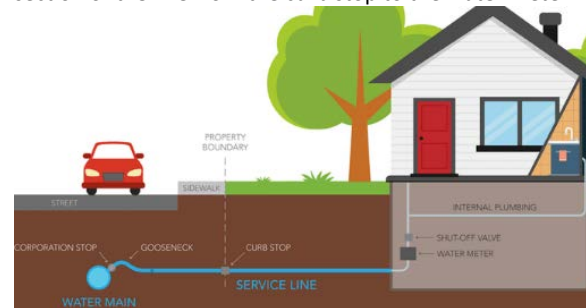
Occupants of buildings where lead service lines are present should adequately flush water lines after prolonged periods of stagnation to reduce potential lead hazards, but the use of NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified lead filters is the most thorough means of lead-water safety.

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 that has been filtered with an NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified lead filter.

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

What is a service line?

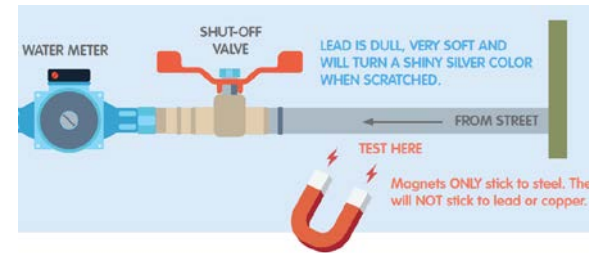
The service line connects the water main in the street to the property. Water mains are not made of lead. The water utility owns the portion of the service line from the water main to the curb stop. The property owner owns the section of the line from the curb stop to the water meter.



Do I have a lead service line?

Look up an address to see if it has a lead service line at Milwaukee.gov/water or call Milwaukee Water Works Customer Service, (414) 286-2830.

Test a Service Line to see if it is made of Lead



1. Find the water meter. This is typically in the basement but it could be on the first floor. From the meter, work your way to where the service line enters the building in the wall or in the floor.
2. Find an area to test on the pipe between the wall or floor and the shut-off valve. (See diagram above) The pipe may be wrapped in insulation. Pull this back to reveal the pipe.
3. Use a magnet to see if it sticks to the pipe. If it sticks, the pipe is made of galvanized steel.
4. If the magnet does not stick, use a key or a coin to scratch the pipe. If the scratch is copper-colored like a penny, the pipe is copper.
5. If the scraped area is shiny and silver, the service line is made of lead.

If your service line is made of lead and your property is not on our website list, please call Customer Service at (414) 286-2830.

If your home has a service line or internal plumbing containing lead, it also most likely has lead-based paint. Homes built before 1978 likely contain some lead-based paint. Lead-based paint hazards are the main cause of lead poisoning in children. Find safety tips for protecting your children from lead paint hazards at LeadSafeMke.com.

How can I reduce the risk of exposure to lead in drinking water if my home has a lead service line or lead plumbing and fixtures?

Occupants of buildings where lead service lines are present should adequately flush water lines after prolonged periods of stagnation to reduce potential lead hazards, but the use of NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified lead filters is the most thorough means of 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 that

has been filtered with an NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified lead filter.

1. Replace your lead service line and/or plumbing with copper. When a service line is replaced, City of Milwaukee Ordinance requires that the entire line from the meter in the home to the main be replaced with copper. If you choose to replace your portion of the lead service line, the City will replace its portion. If your lead service line leaks, fails or is damaged, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the city's Lead Service Line Replacement Program. Call Customer Service at (414) 286-2830 for more information.

2. Use a drinking water filter certified to remove lead and maintain it properly.

Households with residents or visitors that include women who are pregnant, may become pregnant (women ages 15-45) or who are breastfeeding, and/or children up to the age of 6 should only use bottled water from a known lead-free source or cold, filtered tap water (using NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified water filtration device) to make formula, concentrated juices, and for cooking and drinking. Always follow the manufacturer's guidelines to install and maintain the filter. Find information about filters at LeadSafeMke.com.

3. Run your water until it's cold

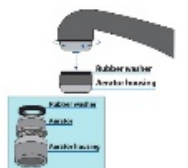
Before using tap water for drinking or cooking, flush drinking water by running faucets on cold for a minimum of three minutes (or longer if necessary) until the water is noticeably colder. This brings in fresh water from the main. Do this especially after prolonged periods of stagnation sitting unused in your pipes. Not running the water for the recommended length of time may increase your risk of lead exposure.

4. Always use water from the cold water tap for cooking and drinking.

Hot water can dissolve lead from plumbing more quickly. Boiling water does not remove lead. Hot water can safely be used for bathing and washing hands, dishes and laundry.

5. Periodically inspect and remove aerators from faucets and rinse out any debris, which may include particles of lead. Then re-attach.

Do this once a month, or more frequently if there is water utility work nearby.



6. Flush pipes after any main replacement, street construction or home remodeling projects that include plumbing work. Physical disturbance of the lead service line or lead plumbing by these activities may temporarily release lead into the water.

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

1. Remove screens and aerators from the end of every faucet and rinse particles from them.
 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 the screens and aerators to the faucets. The cost to flush four taps for 10 minutes is about 16 cents.
- Not running the water for the recommended length of time may increase your risk of lead exposure.

If you need this translated, call Customer Service at (414) 286-2830.

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Braille