

Drinking water safety

Milwaukee's water quality meets all federal and state guidelines when it leaves the treatment plants. Lead may be present in drinking water from service lines and interior plumbing that contain lead.

In Milwaukee, water service lines installed before 1963 may contain lead. Pipe solder, brass fixtures and/or faucets made before 2014 also may contain lead. Lead can dissolve into the water when water sits in lead pipes for an extended period of time.

Reduce the risk of lead exposure

Residents of buildings where lead service lines are present should adequately flush water lines if water has been unused for 6 or more hours to reduce potential lead hazards, but the use of a filter certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 53 is the best approach 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 or who are breastfeeding, and children up to the age of 6, should drink and cook only with water that has been filtered with a filter certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 53.

If using water directly from the faucet (without a filter), use only cold water and run a full stream from the faucet for at least three minutes before using. Flushing a 100 ft. service line requires less than 5 gallons and costs less than 2 cents. Not running your water for the recommended length of time may increase your risk of lead exposure.

To reduce the risk of lead exposure, Milwaukee adds food grade phosphate to the water during the treatment process. This forms a protective coating inside pipes and plumbing fixtures. However, we are recommending customers follow the steps in this brochure to further reduce the risk of lead exposure.

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

Children under the age of 6 are especially at risk for lead poisoning because their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults. Their brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the harmful 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. The younger the child, the more likely even trace amounts of lead in water may pose an elevated risk because water makes up a large part of their diet, including formula mixed with water for bottle-fed infants.

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. The Milwaukee Health Department recommends testing at 12, 18 & 24 months and annual testing at 3, 4 & 5 years.

If you are pregnant or you have a child under age 6, talk to a doctor about lead testing. Pregnant people should know about lead hazards to prevent exposure to a developing baby.

Financial assistance may be available:

- ⇨ If you discover a leak in your lead service line, please call our Control Center at (414) 286-3710. We will send an investigator to your property to assess the leak.
- ⇨ If Water Works replaces the lead service line due to a leak, or as part of a planned project, the property owner may be eligible for financial assistance.
- ⇨ Residential properties with 1-4 units and no commercial purposes are eligible for a fully subsidized replacement.
- ⇨ If Water Works intends to replace the lead service line, we will contact the property owner to prepare them for the project and to review their eligibility for financial assistance.
- ⇨ Owners of commercial properties where replacement is required, and those who elect to voluntarily replace their service line, are eligible for 15-year special assessment financing.
- ⇨ For more information, call our Lead Service Line Replacement Program at (414) 286-6304.

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This document is available by request in other languages. Please call Customer Service at (414) 286-2830 or email watwebcs@milwaukee.gov.


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milwaukee.gov/LeadPipes

milwaukee.gov/water (414) 286-2830

milwaukee.gov/health (414) 286-2165

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LEAD-SAFE WATER GUIDE

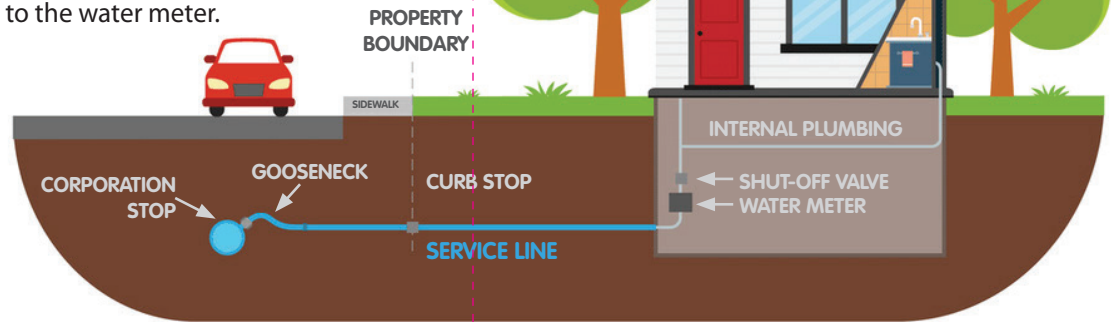


**Lead-Safe
Milwaukee**



What is the service line?

The service line connects the water main in the street to the property. Water mains are not made of lead. Many service lines are 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?

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

Test your service line to see if it is made of lead

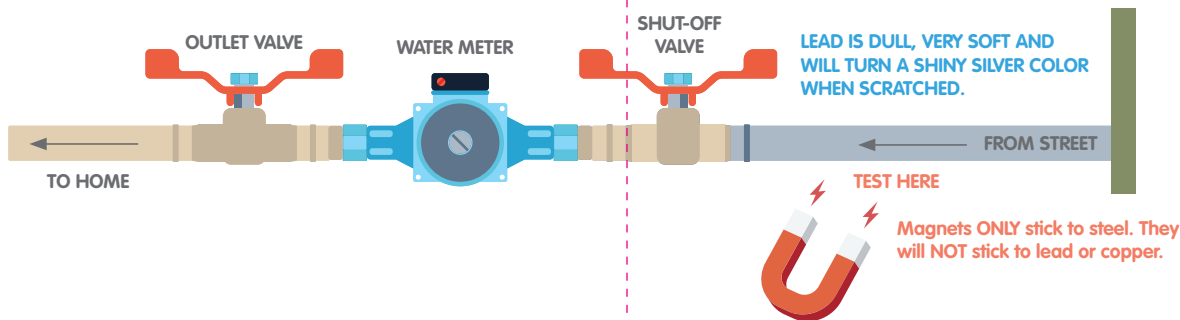
1. Find the water meter. This is usually in the basement but it could be on the first floor. From the meter, work your way to where the service line enters the building in the wall or in the floor.
2. Find an area to test on the pipe between the wall or floor and the shut-off valve. (See picture below) The pipe may be wrapped in insulation. Pull it 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. This is safe!

5. If the scraped area is shiny and silver, the service line is made of lead. This is not safe!

6. After touching a lead service line, wash your hands with soap and water.

If you find your service line is made of lead and your property is not listed on our website, please call Customer Service at (414) 286-2830. If you are the current resident and do not own the property, please share your results with your landlord.

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 milwaukee.gov/lead.

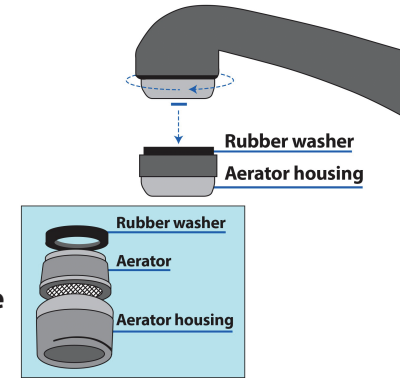


How can I reduce the risk of exposure to lead in drinking water if my home has a lead service line or lead plumbing and fixtures?

1. **Replace your lead service line and/or plumbing with copper.** Lead service line replacements are encouraged. Learn about and apply to the Owner Request Option program at milwaukee.gov/OROP. Partial replacements and repairs are not allowed.
2. **Use a drinking water filter certified to remove lead and maintain it properly.** Households with residents or visitors who are at-risk populations should only use bottled water from a known lead-free source or cold, filtered tap water (using a filter certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 53). Always follow the manufacturer's guidelines to install and maintain the filter. Remember to change the filter cartridges on filter systems regularly. Find more information about filters at milwaukee.gov/filters.
3. **Flush your water until it is cold.** Before using tap water for drinking or cooking, flush your 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 very long periods of not using it. Not running your 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, washing hands, dishes and laundry.
5. **Periodically remove aerators from faucets.** Rinse out any debris and then re-attach. Aerators may collect grime which may include particles of lead. Do this once a month, or more frequently if there is water utility work nearby.

6. **Flush your pipes after any water 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, leaving taps running as you go. Fully open each cold water tap and allow the water to run for 30 minutes.
3. After 30 minutes, start at the top floor and turn off the water at each faucet, finishing in the basement. Your water should be clear after 10 minutes. But let the taps run for 30 minutes to ensure any construction debris has been flushed from your pipes.
4. Re-attach the screens and aerators to the faucets. The cost to flush four taps for 30 minutes will cost you less than \$1.

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