





## FAQ

### How does lead get into the drinking water?

Our system's water mains that carry the water to you are made mostly of iron and plastic, and therefore do not add lead to water. However, lead can get into tap water through the service line that connects your home to the water main if it is made of lead. Lead may also come from lead solder used to connect pipes in home plumbing, and from some faucets and fixtures. When lead is present in water, it is typically due to the water flowing through service lines or internal pipes or plumbing in buildings with lead pipes or plumbing with lead solder or brass.

### What is a water service line?

A water service line is a pipe that brings water from the water main in the street into your home. It may be made of the following materials:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Galvanized: A dull, silver-gray color. Use a magnet - strong magnets will typically cling to galvanized pipes.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Copper: The color of a copper penny.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plastic: Usually white, rigid pipe that is jointed to water supply piping with a clamp. Note: It can be other colors, including blue and black.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead: A dull, silver-gray color that is easily scratched with a coin. Use a magnet - strong magnets will <u>not</u> cling to lead pipes.</li></ul>

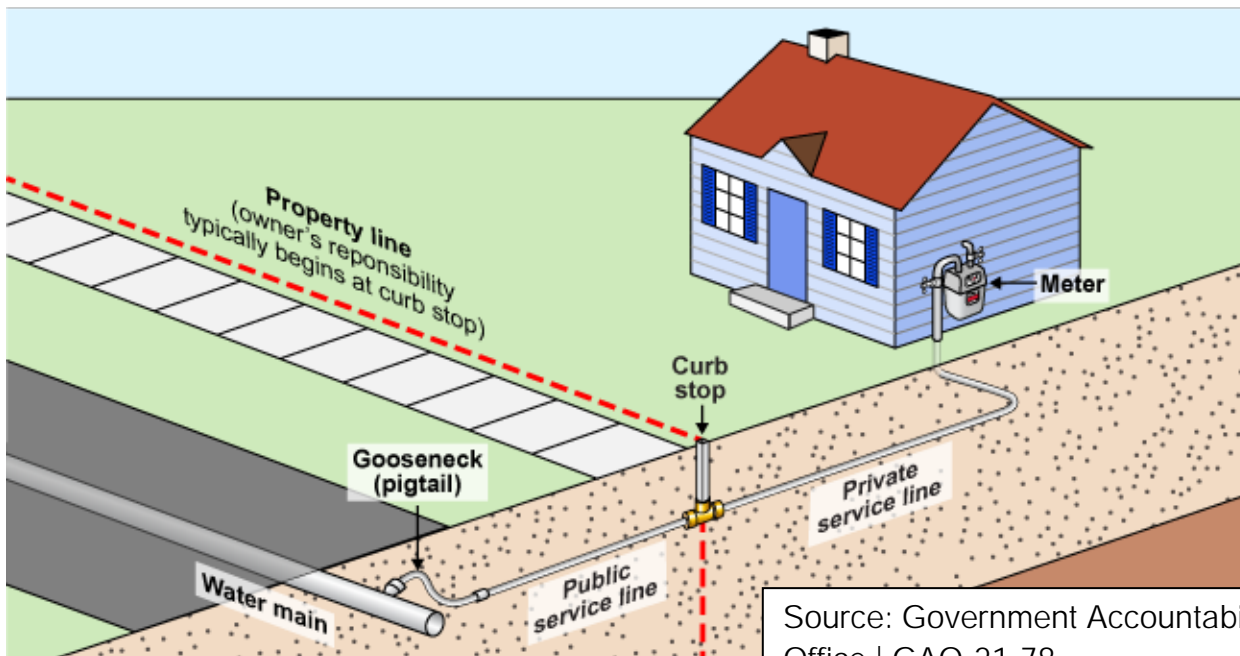
### Why are lead service lines an issue?

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems. Because lead may pose serious health risks, both the EPA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) agree that "there is no known safe level of lead in a child's blood".

Contact your health care provider or your local health department to find out if your child needs to be tested for lead. A blood lead level test is the only way to know if your child is being exposed to lead. For more information on Massachusetts' childhood lead testing program, contact the Department of Public Health (DPH) at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention-program> or at 1-800-532-9571.

**If you have health concerns, please contact your health care provider with any questions.**

### Who owns the water service line?



Water service line ownership is split between the Town and the customer. For every service line there is at least two entries in the inventory: the town-owned side, also known as the “public side”, generally defined from the water main in the street to the curb stop (valve) at or near the property line; and the customer side, also known as the “private side”, generally from the curb stop to building and/or the water meter. Unless we are to physically enter your home or dig a hole in your yard, we cannot determine the type of material your water service line is made of.

### Video on determining your service line material

<https://youtu.be/s84k056nC4I>

**I received a letter from the Town stating the customer-owned portion of my property’s water service line is unknown and may contain lead. What does this mean?**

In October, 2024, the Town submitted its initial Water Service Line Inventory to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). According to MassDEP, all unknown service line materials installed before 1986 should be considered as if they may contain lead. In 1986, the EPA & MassDEP banned public water suppliers from using lead.

**An unknown material classification means the** Town could not report what type of material the customer-owned portion of your water service line is made from to MassDEP because we have not received a response from the customer on the requested survey. The Survey can be accessed here:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/6046ab5c1a544a1290c09906b0e1a565>

**Why did I not receive a letter notice asking me to fill out a material inventory survey?**

You did not receive a letter notice asking to fill out a material inventory survey because the Water Department has a record of the water service line material for your property. Your water service line is not lead.

Links about Lead

<https://www.epa.gov/lead>

<https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule>

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/revised-lead-and-copper-rule>

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>

[https://www.mass.gov/guides/is-there-lead-in-my-tap-water#-how-can-lead-get-into-my-water?-](https://www.mass.gov/guides/is-there-lead-in-my-tap-water#-how-can-lead-get-into-my-water?)

<https://www.mass.gov/lead-in-drinking-water>

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/lead-and-copper-rule-revisions>

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/lead-in-drinking-water-faqs-english-0/download>

<https://www.mass.gov/lead-and-your-childs-health>

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention-program>

<https://www.cdc.gov/lead-prevention/symptoms-complications/>