

Identifying what material your home or buildings Water Service line is made of.

This procedure will identify what the service line material is coming into the basement only.

Let's say that the line was lead from the main into the basement originally. At some point, there was a leak between the curb and the basement wall, and the line was replaced from the leak into the basement up to the water meter and all the lines inside the home are copper. If you follow this procedure, it would indicate that the service line and interior piping is copper. You may not be aware that the service is actually lead from the main up to the point the line was replaced due to the leak. So this procedure is not full proof.

Go to where the water line enters the basement or building.

Scratch the line to expose the actual pipe. If it shines like a penny, the material is copper.

If, after you have scratched the line, it is a silver color, the line is either steel or lead. If after scratching, and seeing the line is a silver color, take a magnet and see if it is attracted (sticks to) the line. If it is attracted (sticks) to the line, it is steel.

If the magnet was not attracted to (Did not stick to) the line, it is lead. This service line is of the greater concern, as, under the right circumstances, the lead could leach into the water.

Under normal circumstances, the risk of lead, even with a lead service line is manageable.

If you have a lead service, the best method you could use to prevent consuming water with elevated lead levels would be to flush the line whenever there has been a lengthy period (4-6 hours) during which no water has been used. Draw water until what has been in the line during this period is flushed away, and then draw water for consumption afterwards.

You could save this flushed water for purposes other than consumption, for use as water for plants, cleaning, etc.

Just as a guide, a $\frac{3}{4}$ " water line, 100 feet long, would hold about two and one-third (2.3) gallons of water. If you have a kitchen sink, equipped with an aerator, and the flow is 1.5 to 2.0 gallons per minute, and the distance from the main line to your water meter location is 100 feet, you would need to flush the line for one and one-half minutes.

Note:

In Steubenville, a chemical (orthophosphate) is fed to coat the lines so that the water does not contact the pipe. This is what is referred to as Steubenville's "Corrosion Control Technique". Since the water does not directly contact the pipe, no pipe material can leach into the water.