



Town of Southborough

Water Service Line Identification Procedure

1. Locate Meter – It may be inside: in the basement, crawlspace, or garage. If you cannot find the meter, look for the service line by checking the basement or first floor, looking first along the exterior walls particularly on the side of the building facing the street. The incoming pipe will come through an external wall or the floor and then connect to the water meter. You should see a valve on it, and it may look something like the picture below.
2. Locate Service Line – Find the pipe close to where it comes in through the wall or floor. This will be before the meter, as close to the wall or floor as possible.



3. Fill out the attached form.

Examples of Typical Water Service Pipe Materials





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Is it Plastic?

Plastic pipes are usually made of either PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride) or HDPE (High Density Polyethylene) and can be various colors including white, blue, black, green, etc. Plastic is not a source of lead in drinking water.

If the pipe is plastic, there may still be lead in other parts of the plumbing such as faucets.



White PVC



Black and Blue HDPE

Copper Pipes

Copper pipes may appear as dull brown color, but if you scratch the pipe, underneath it will be orange like a penny. A magnet will not stick to a copper pipe, and tapping a copper pipe with a coin will produce a metallic ringing noise. Copper is not a source of lead in drinking water. However, there may still be lead elsewhere in the interior plumbing.





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Galvanized Steel Pipes

Galvanized steel pipes are a dull gray color. They are hard to scratch, and underneath the color of the pipe will remain a dull gray. A magnet will stick to galvanized steel, and tapping a steel pipe with a coin will produce a metallic ringing noise. Steel pipes also typically have threaded fittings.



Steel pipes on their own are not a source of lead in drinking water (unless they have been lined with lead); however, steel pipes in older homes may pose a serious risk if they have been connected to lead plumbing at any point. Galvanized steel pipes can trap lead on their inside surface and periodically release those bits of lead, even after lead plumbing is removed.

Lead Pipes

Lead pipes are typically a dull gray color and are very soft. Lead pipes can be easily scratched and will turn a shiny silver color when scratched. A magnet will not stick to lead, and tapping a lead pipe with a coin will produce a dull noise. Lead pipes typically are not threaded. Lead pipes are more likely to be found in older cities and homes built before 1986.





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Additional resources

- Use EPA's Protect Your Tap: A Quick Check for Lead

See: <https://tinyurl.com/EPA-LeadServiceLink>

- Click "Start the Guide"



- Select

② **Municipal Water (I get a water bill)**

- Select

② **My supplier thought that my pipes were probably made of some other material. To confirm, proceed to locate your water line.**

- Continue with the guide.

- New York State DOH video "How To Find Out If You Have A Lead Water Service Line"

<https://tinyurl.com/LeadServiceLineSurvey>



Town of Southborough Water Service Line Survey Form

Address: _____

Date: _____

Time Arrived: _____

1. Questions for Resident
 - a. Owner or Tenant _____
 - b. First Name _____
 - c. Last Name _____
 - d. Email Address _____
 - e. Phone Number _____
 - f. Year of Original House Construction (approximate) _____
 - g. Year moved into house (approximate) _____
2. Locate meter and water service. Wipe the service line clean. If the pipe is painted, use sandpaper to gently expose the pipe. Take photos of the meter and service. Number of Photos taken _____
3. What Color is pipe (circle one)?
 - a. Black
 - b. Orange
 - c. Pale orange
 - d. Brown
 - e. White
 - f. Shade of gray
 - g. Other
4. Scratch the pipe with a key or coin like you would a lottery ticket. Note whether it is soft or hard (circle one).
 - a. Soft, easily scratched
 - b. Hard to scratch
5. What is the color beneath the scratch (circle one).
 - a. Orange like a new penny
 - b. Dull gray
 - c. Shiny silver
 - d. Black
 - e. Other



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Address: _____

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6. Place a strong magnet on the pipe (circle one)
 - a. The magnet sticks
 - b. The magnet does not stick.
7. Tap the pipe with a key or coin, note the sound produced (circle one)
 - a. A dull noise
 - b. A metallic ring.
8. Best Guess of the Service Line Material (circle one)
 - a. Plastic
 - b. Copper
 - c. Galvanized Steel
 - d. Lead
 - e. Not Sure

Upon Completion of this survey form, either

- (1) email to: dpwoffice@southboroughma.com (write Lead Service Inventory Survey in the Subject Line)
 - (2) mail to: DPW Lead Service Inventory Survey
147 Cordaville Road
Southborough, MA 01772-1802
 - (3) Drop off the Completed form to the DPW at 147 Cordaville Road, Southborough, MA
- or
- (4) Wait for our staff to either call or email you and we will schedule a time to visit your house and complete the survey form.