

# MATERIALS VERIFICATION TEST

## HOW TO IDENTIFY A LEAD WATER SERVICE LINE

The following steps can help you find out what your water pipe (also called a service line) is made of.

**Tools Needed:** Refrigerator magnet and coin or key

**STEP 1:** Find your water meter (it could be outside or inside). Your water meter should say “gallons” on the dial, whereas the units on a gas or electric meter will say “cubic feet” or “kilowatt hours.”

If your water meter is outside, it may be on the sidewalk or in the part of the yard that faces the street, and it will look something like this:



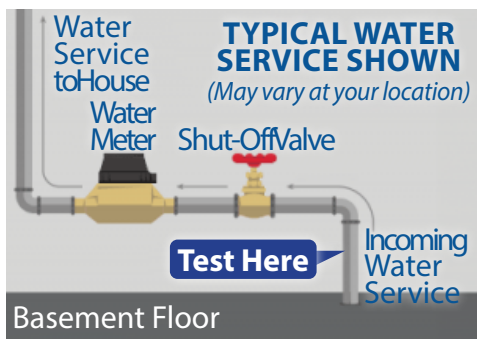
If your water meter is inside, it may be in a crawlspace or closet, or even the garage, and it will look something like this:



**STEP 2:** Locate where the water pipe enters the building or home. The water pipe should be a one (1) inch wide (i.e., 1-inch diameter) pipe coming from either underground or through the foundation floor or wall.

If your water meter is outside, walk the shortest path from the water meter to your home. That’s where the pipe will enter your house. Now go inside and find the pipe. If your water meter is inside, then your water pipe should be connected near it on the same wall.

**STEP 3:** Identify the test area on the water pipe. Focus on the section of pipe where the service line enters the building. The test area should be between the point where the pipe enters the building and the shut-off valve. It should look something like this:



**STEP 4:** Determine what your service line is made of. Water pipes can be plastic, copper, galvanized metal, or lead. First, visually inspect the test area on your water pipe. You may need to rub off any paint, corrosion, or buildup on the outside of the pipe to get a good look. Compare your pipe to the chart below:

LEAD	GALVANIZED METAL	COPPER	PLASTIC
			
			
<p>A dull, silver-gray color that is easily scratched with a coin.</p> <p>Lead pipes widen at base and often form a "bulb."</p> <p><b>NOT MAGNETIC</b></p>	<p>A dull, silver-gray color. NOT easily scratched.</p> <p>Galvanized pipes have "threads" at connections.</p> <p><b>MAGNETIC</b></p>	<p>The color of a copper penny. Older pipes may have green or brown tarnish.</p> <p><b>NOT MAGNETIC</b></p>	<p>A rigid (PVC) or flexible (PEX) pipe that is joined to water supply piping with a clamp. May be white, gray, blue, or red.</p> <p><b>NOT MAGNETIC</b></p>

If your pipe is metal, here are some ways to help determine the material it's made of:

**Magnet Test:** If your magnet sticks to the pipe, it's likely galvanized metal. Magnets will not stick to lead, copper, or plastic pipes.

**Scratch Test:** Using a coin or key, lightly scratch the surface of the water pipe in the test area. Be sure not to puncture the pipe or use too much force.



If the pipe is easily scratched and reveals a silver-gray color, it's likely lead.



If the pipe does not scratch easily and leaves a dull gray color, it's likely galvanized metal.



If the scratch mark is copper in color and shiny, it's likely copper.

Need more help? There are a few ways other ways you can determine what your service line is made of:

**Option 1:** Contact a licensed plumber to make the determination.

**Option 2:** Purchase a lead test kit at a hardware or home improvement store. Look for an EPA recognized kit.

**Option 3:** Visit [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead) and use the EPA's online "Protect Your Tap" tool.



**STEP 5:** Once you determine what your water service line is made of, take a photo of your water pipe and complete our online survey! You can scan the QR Code to complete the survey or visit [NorthMiamiFL.gov/LCR](http://NorthMiamiFL.gov/LCR) to submit your results.

Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).