

Investigating Your Water Service and Plumbing



Overview- Consumer

1

Locate Your Service Line

Service line pipes are most commonly exposed where the pipe enters the building through the wall or floor. An isolation/shut off valve is generally installed at the point of entry.

2

Identify Service Line Material

Use a screwdriver, key, or coin to scratch the service line close to the floor. If the scraped area is:

- shiny silver and a magnet does not stick to the pipe, it is lead.
- copper like a penny, it is copper.
- a dull gray, and a magnet sticks to the pipe, it is galvanized steel/iron.

3

Take a Photo

If possible, take a photo of your service line, where it enters your building. If you are able to do a scratch and magnet test, take a photo of your results.

4

Inspect Your Interior Plumbing

Interior plumbing refers to the pipes and fixtures on the interior of your home or building. This means the pipes supplying water to the sinks, showers, water heaters, refrigerators, or other fixtures in your building.

5

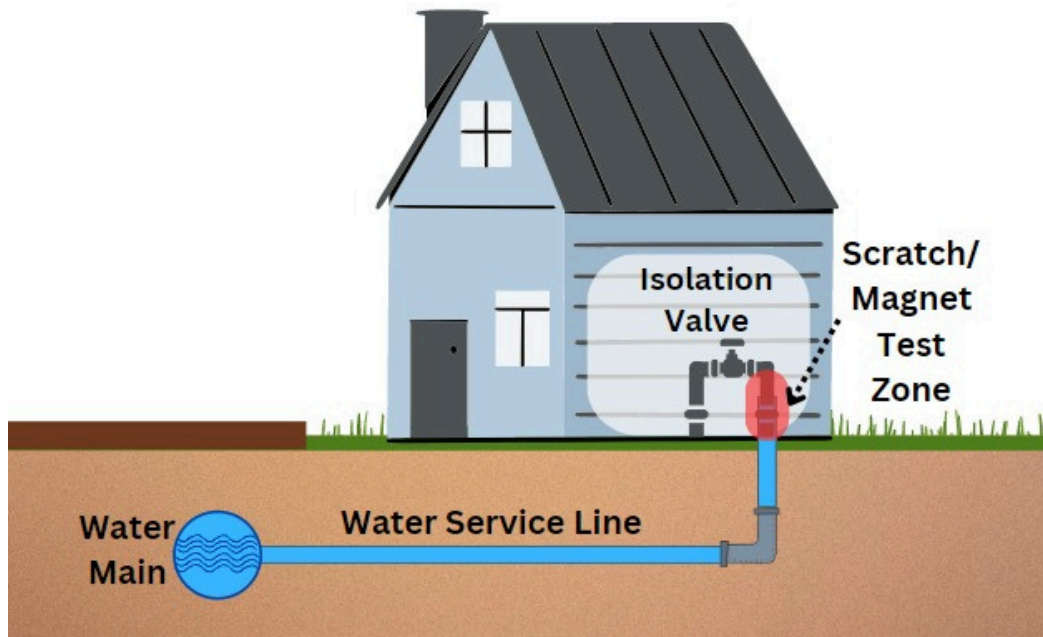
Submit Your Findings

Once you have identified your service line material and premise plumbing material, you must submit your findings.

1

Locate Your Service Line

Service lines are most commonly exposed where the pipe enters the building through the wall or floor. An isolation/shut off valve is generally installed at the point of entry. If you have a crawlspace or basement, the service line will likely come into your building on that level.



2

Identify Service Line Material

Lead



Bulb

A dull, silver colored pipe that can be easily scratched with a coin or key. Scratching leaves a shiny silver color. Magnets WILL NOT stick to lead pipes. Lead pipes are bendable and commonly have a "bulb".

Copper



Brown colored pipe that can be easily scratched with a coin or key. Scratching leaves a copper color. Magnets WILL NOT stick to copper pipes.

Galvanized Iron/Steel



A dull, silver colored pipe that is hard to scratch with a coin or key. Scratching leaves a dull gray color. A magnet WILL stick to a galvanized iron/steel pipe.

Plastic

Generally, black, white, or blue piping. Plastic piping is rigid. A magnet WILL NOT stick to plastic pipe. The color of plastic does NOT indicate the type of plastic. To identify the type of plastic your service line is made of, look for the printed markings on the side of the pipe.



3

Take a Photo

Take a few photos of your service line, where it enters your building.

The photos should:

- Be well lit.
- Show the area where you did the scratch and/or magnet test.
- If possible, show your shut off valve and water meter. You do not need to do this if it is difficult or unsafe to access.

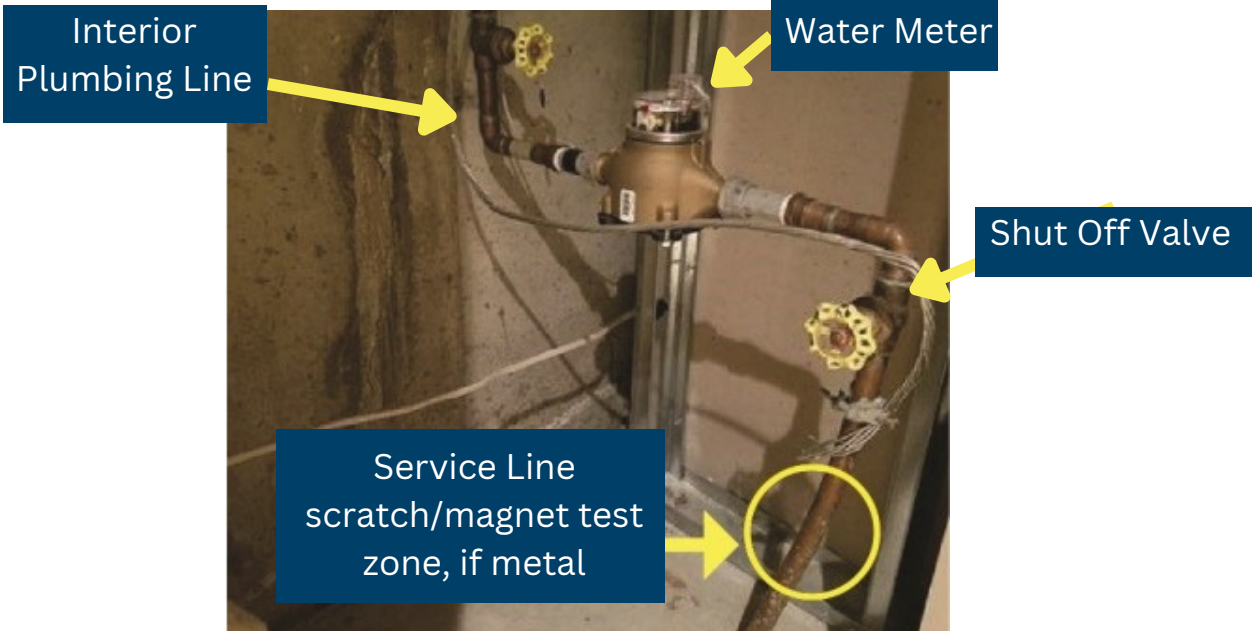


Photo of Service Line within a Basement

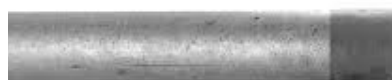
4

Inspect Your Interior Plumbing

Interior plumbing refers to the pipes and fixtures inside your home or building supplying water to the sinks, showers, water heaters, refrigerators, etc. Interior plumbing is typically run in the walls, so to identify the material, you can normally find exposed sections of pipe going into your water heater or going up to the taps under your sink.



Copper



Steel



Plastic-PVC



Plastic-HDPE



Plastic-PEX

The color of plastic pipe is NOT an indicator of the type of plastic it is made of. The best way to identify plastic pipe is by the printed markings on the side of the pipe.

5

Submit Your Findings

Please use the [Lead-Safe Alaska Portal](#) to document your findings. To submit your information, follow these steps:



1. Scan the QR Code with your phone, or go to <https://arcg.is/0WfOjb> to reach the customer survey.
2. Enter your utility's public water system ID (PWSID). The PWSID for your utility is:

A K 2 1 3 0 1 4 8

3. Enter your information into the survey form.
4. Select whether you are filling the form out with Service Line Information, Interior Plumbing Information, or Both.
5. Fill out the remaining fields and attach the photos, that you took of your service line and/or interior plumbing.
6. Click Submit.

Congratulations, you have finished submitting your information! Now, DEC will review the information you provided and reach out to you directly if we have any questions. Thank you for doing your part to keep Alaska's drinking water safe!

If you have any questions, please call 907-269-3056 or email dec.dw.lsl@alaska.gov for assistance. Thank you.

For More Information

Alaska Drinking Water Program Guidance: <https://dec.alaska.gov/eh/dw/lcrr>

EPA Service Line Material Identification: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/protect-your-tap-quick-check-lead-0>

LSLR Collaborative Guidance: <https://www.lslr-collaborative.org/identifying-service-line-material.html>