

How to Identify a Lead Water Service Line

Tools Needed: Flathead Screwdriver, Refrigerator Magnet, and a Penny (or other coin)

Step One: Locate the water service line coming into the building.




This is typically found in the basement. An “inlet valve” is installed on the pipe after the point of entry. The pipe at the point of entry is the best location to test for lead. If this pipe is wrapped or covered, expose a small area of the metal underneath for testing, replace covering after test.

Step Two: Scratch the surface of the pipe.

Using the flathead screwdriver or coin, lightly scratch the surface of the pipe. Do not use a knife or other sharp instrument and take care not to puncture the pipe itself, you only want to scrape along the pipe’s exterior.

Step Three: Examine the scratched area and test with the magnet.

Use the chart below to help identify your pipe material.

	<p style="text-align: center;">LEAD PIPE</p> <p>Scratch Test - The scraped area is shiny and silver.</p> <p>Magnet Test - The magnet will not stick to a lead pipe.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">COPPER PIPE</p> <p>Scratch Test - The scraped area is copper colored, like a penny.</p> <p>Magnet Test - The magnet will not stick to a copper pipe.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">GALVANIZED STEEL PIPE</p> <p>Scratch Test - The scraped area will remain a dull gray.</p> <p>Magnet Test - The magnet will stick to a galvanized steel pipe.</p>