

Lead Service Line Inventory Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL

Why did I receive a letter on lead in drinking water?

The letters are required by a new federal mandate, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Lead and Copper Rule Revisions / Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRR / LCRI), which were initially issued in 2021. These regulations impose new requirements on water systems including: developing, updating and making publicly available an inventory of construction materials for water service lines; additional water sampling at customer's homes, in schools and daycare facilities; and providing our customers with educational materials concerning the risks of lead in drinking water.

What is a water service line?

A service line is the underground pipe that connects your home to the water main.

Where can I locate my service line?

It can typically be seen where it enters your home in the basement or crawl space. Your service line is connected to your water meter.

Do these regulations mean I have lead pipes?

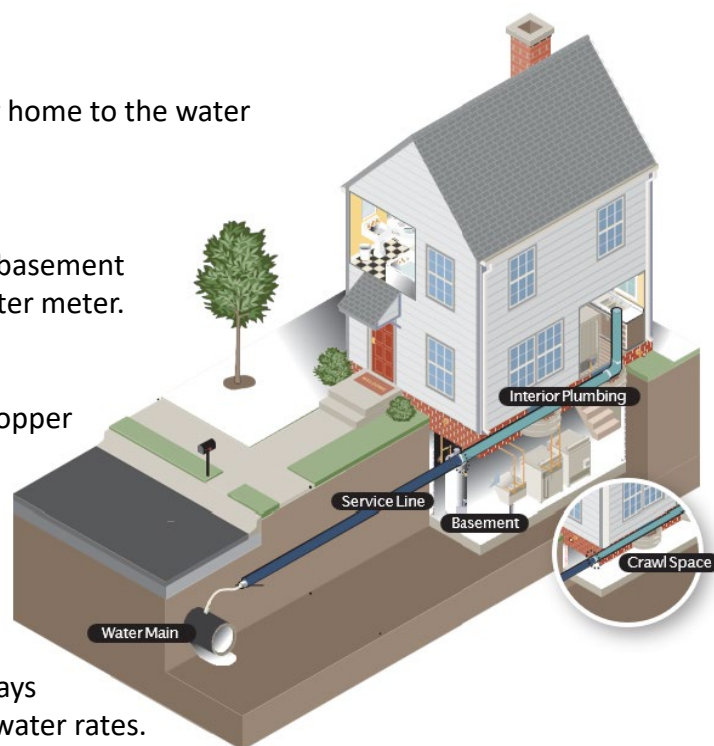
No. A primary purpose of the revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule is simply to identify the material of all water service lines to enhance customer awareness. Identifying out-of-date materials, including lead, is the first step toward eliminating them from the system.

Will this program affect my water bill?

No. NFWB obtained a New York State grant that largely pays for these Initial steps so it doesn't currently impact your water rates. A funding plan is being developed that will again maximize State and Federal grants and low interest financing to minimize the financial impacts on customers.

Where can I find more information regarding this program?

All information can be found on the program webpage at: <https://nfwb.org/reports/quality/> For additional questions on the Water Quality Initiative please call 716-283-9770 and leave a message or email: waterquality@nfwb.org



For more information, visit the program webpage:

<https://nfwb.org/reports/quality/>

Email: waterquality@nfwb.org

Call and leave a message: 716-283-9770

Frequently Asked Questions

WATER QUALITY

How does lead get into drinking water?

Lead is seldom found as a natural contaminant in drinking water and generally originates from lead-based plumbing materials. Lead can enter drinking water if plumbing materials containing lead corrode or if particles containing lead are dislodged from the pipe and come through the tap. Lead-based plumbing fixtures are generally found in your home and are not part of the water distribution system in the street. These materials could include pipes made of lead, lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, and brass and chrome plated brass faucets. Lead service lines are typically the most significant source of lead in the water. These materials are more likely to be found in homes built before the 1960s.

Do all lead service lines contaminate drinking water?

Not necessarily. All lead service lines have the potential to leach lead into drinking water, but the NFWB carefully manages the water chemistry to limit this from happening. This new regulation aims to reduce potential lead exposure by identifying where lead lines could exist, developing a plan to remove lead lines from the system and also reviewing water chemistry practices so that if fixtures containing lead remain in a home that corrosion and potential lead exposure is minimized.

If a service line constructed with lead is identified on my property and then replaced, how can you ensure there is no longer lead in my water?

NFWB and project Contractors can provide instructions on how to properly flush your home's plumbing following a replacement. Additionally, if you are still concerned about lead in your water, a certified drinking water laboratory can perform follow-up sampling to demonstrate that the lead exposure risk from the water service line has been reduced.

If there are lead-based materials in my service line or premise plumbing, what steps can I take to reduce lead exposure?

Please refer to the Lead Reduction Steps on EPA's website at: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water#reducehome>

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SERVICE LINE INVENTORY

How do I know if my service line material is unknown?

NFWB has developed a service line inventory map, which allows you to lookup the material by home address. The inventory can be found at: <https://nfwb.org/reports/quality/> and clicking on the LSLI Map hyperlink

How do I determine what material my water service line is made of?

A custom survey with instructions can be found at: <https://nfwb.org/reports/quality/> and clicking on the LSLI Survey hyperlink

Why is it necessary for me to self-report the material of my service line?

The Lead and Copper Rule Revisions require an inventory of the entire service line. By validating the material of your service line, you are helping to comply with the regulation as well as identifying any outdated service line materials. This also reduces the overall cost of our water system operations and ultimately your water bill.

What if I can't determine the material or identify/access the service line?

Contact NFWB at (tel.) 716-283-9770 and leave a message or email: waterquality@nfwb.org and we will coordinate a time for a NFWB employee or Contractor to come to your home and identify the material.

Are all residential, commercial, and industrial property owners being asked to complete the survey?

No. Only locations where the service line material is still unknown are being asked to complete the survey.

What will NFWB do with the survey results?

Validated service line material information will be added to NFWB's inventory which is updated publicly and submitted to the NY State Department of Health annually. Service lines constructed of outdated materials will be flagged for replacement.

Will my personal information be shared?

No. Personal information will not be shared. Only public information regarding your service line material will be available on the inventory map and submitted to NYSDOH. This information includes the verified service line material and physical address. Responses will only be used for the purpose of complying with the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions / Improvements.

What happens if I determine I have a lead service line?

Notify NFWB. All lead service lines have the potential to leach lead into drinking water, but we carefully manage the water chemistry in the distribution system to prevent this from happening. Validated lead service lines will be included in a future lead service line replacement plan.

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Frequently Asked Questions

SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT

Will my water service line need to be replaced?

Replacement is only necessary if one of the following conditions is met:

- The service line is constructed of lead
- The service line is galvanized and downstream of a service line with unknown material, or
- If the service line is galvanized and is either currently, or was previously, downstream of a lead service line.

What is a galvanized service line?

Galvanized pipes are iron pipes that have been dipped in a protective zinc coating to prevent corrosion and rust. Galvanized pipe was used as an alternative to lead pipe for water supply service lines. Galvanized service lines can capture lead released from upstream lead service lines. This stored lead can be released into the home, which is why this service line type may require replacement and be categorized as galvanized requiring replacement, or GRR.

Do all galvanized water service lines need to be replaced?

No. Only galvanized service lines that are currently, or were potentially previously, downstream of a lead service line will need to be replaced.

Will I have to pay out of pocket or hire a plumber to replace my service line?

We are actively assessing the potential cost implications of complying with LCRR/LCRI as well as the potential contractors and plumbers that may be needed for replacements. The results of this assessment will be included in a plan that will be shared with our customers upon completion.

Will my water service be interrupted should my water service line require replacement?

Replacement of water service lines will require a temporary interruption of water service to remove the existing service line, install the new service line, and connect to the new service line. This interruption will be kept to as short a duration as possible and will be no longer than eight hours.

How long will it take to replace the water service line? What materials will be used?

Water line replacements typically take between four to eight hours to complete. Materials approved by the USEPA, NYSDOH and NFWB, including copper, will be used to replace the service line.

Will my property be disturbed? Who is responsible for restoration?

Water line replacements often do result in property disturbance. However, this should be kept to a minimum. Depending on the contract vehicle, the Contractor and/or plumber may be required to restore property.

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