

Check Your Water Service Line

HOW DO I CHECK MY SERVICE LINE'S MATERIAL?

To find out if you have a copper, lead or galvanized steel service on your property, you (or your landlord) can perform a Materials Verification Test on the water service line where it connects to the water meter to determine the material of the water service line on your property.

Please follow the steps below, and then send the results of the test along with your address to oakland.ub@gmail.com (or bring to City Hall). The City of Oakland will include your results in their water service line inventory records.

What You Need

- A house key or coin
- A strong refrigerator magnet

Steps to Check Your Service Line

1. Find the water meter on your property.
2. Look for the pipe that comes through the outside wall of your home and connects to your meter.
3. Use a key or coin to gently scratch the pipe (like you would scratch a lottery ticket). If the pipe is painted, use sandpaper to expose the metal first.
4. Place the magnet on the pipe to see if it sticks to the pipe.
5. Determine your pipe material and send your results, address and a photo of the pipe if possible to oakland.ub@gmail.com.

Your Test Results



If your pipe is **copper**:

The pipe may appear dull brown on the outside but will be the color of a bright penny if gently scratched. A magnet won't stick to a copper pipe.



If your pipe is **lead**:

The pipe will appear dull and soft but will turn a shiny silver color when scratched. A magnet won't stick to the lead pipe.



If your pipe is **galvanized steel**:

The scratched area will remain a dull gray, and a magnet will stick to the surface. If you have a galvanized steel pipe, you may still have a lead gooseneck on your service line.

I performed a visual inspection of my service line. What if I am still not sure about my service line material?

If you tested your water service line, and are still unsure of your service line material, the City will visit your home to inspect your service line at no cost to you. To schedule an inspection, contact the Public Works Department at (712) 482-6811 or email oakland.ub@gmail.com.

Are there other ways I can check to see if I have a lead service line?

For more information on identifying a lead service line, including NPR's interactive tool for lead pipe identification, visit <https://www.lslr-collaborative.org/identifying-service-line-material.html>

Lead test kits to test the pipe can be purchased at your local hardware store. Look for an EPA recognized kit. You can purchase an EPA-approved lead test kit at <https://www.epa.gov/lead/lead-test-kits> or <https://www.amazon.com/dp/b008bk15pu>

For questions about lead in water or testing your water service line, contact the Oakland Public Works Department at (712) 482-6811 or email oakland.ub@gmail.com.