

How to Determine what material your water service line is. Complete the steps below and submit your results Whether your service is copper, lead, or something else, we want to hear from you. You will need: a coin and a strong refrigerator magnet.

Step 1: Locate your water service where it enters the building. This is typically found in the basement near your water meter. Testing should be done where the service enters the building, before the shut-off valve and the water meter.

Step 2: Magnet test. Place a magnet on the pipe and see if it sticks.

Step 3: Scratch test. Carefully scratch the pipe (like you would a lottery ticket) with a coin. Do not use a knife or other sharp tool. If pipe is painted, use sandpaper to expose the metal first.

Step 4: Take a photo. Take a photo of the scratched pipe and compare it to the images below. Be sure to show the pipe entering the building.

Lead



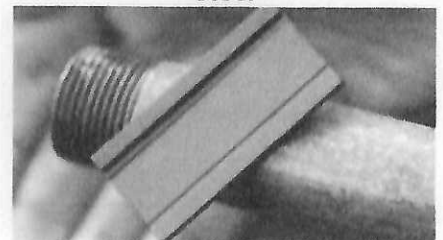
- Magnet does not stick
- Scratched area is shiny and silver
- Joints often have a distinctive bulb or flare
- Flexible pipe, often with visible curves
- Exterior is dull gray

Copper



- Magnet does not stick
- Scratched area is shiny and copper
- Joints are soldered
- Flexible pipe, often with visible curves
- Exterior is brown, sometimes with green or dark brown corrosion

Steel



- Magnet sticks to pipe
- Scratched area remains dull gray
- Joints are threaded (screw together)
- Straight ridged pipe
- Exterior is dark gray or black

Other Materials Brass pipes are similar in color to copper pipes but have threaded connections. A magnet will not stick to a brass pipe. If your pipe has threaded connections and is golden in color, your service line is brass.

Plastic pipes come in a variety of colors, typically white, black, blue, or red. A magnet will not stick to a plastic pipe