



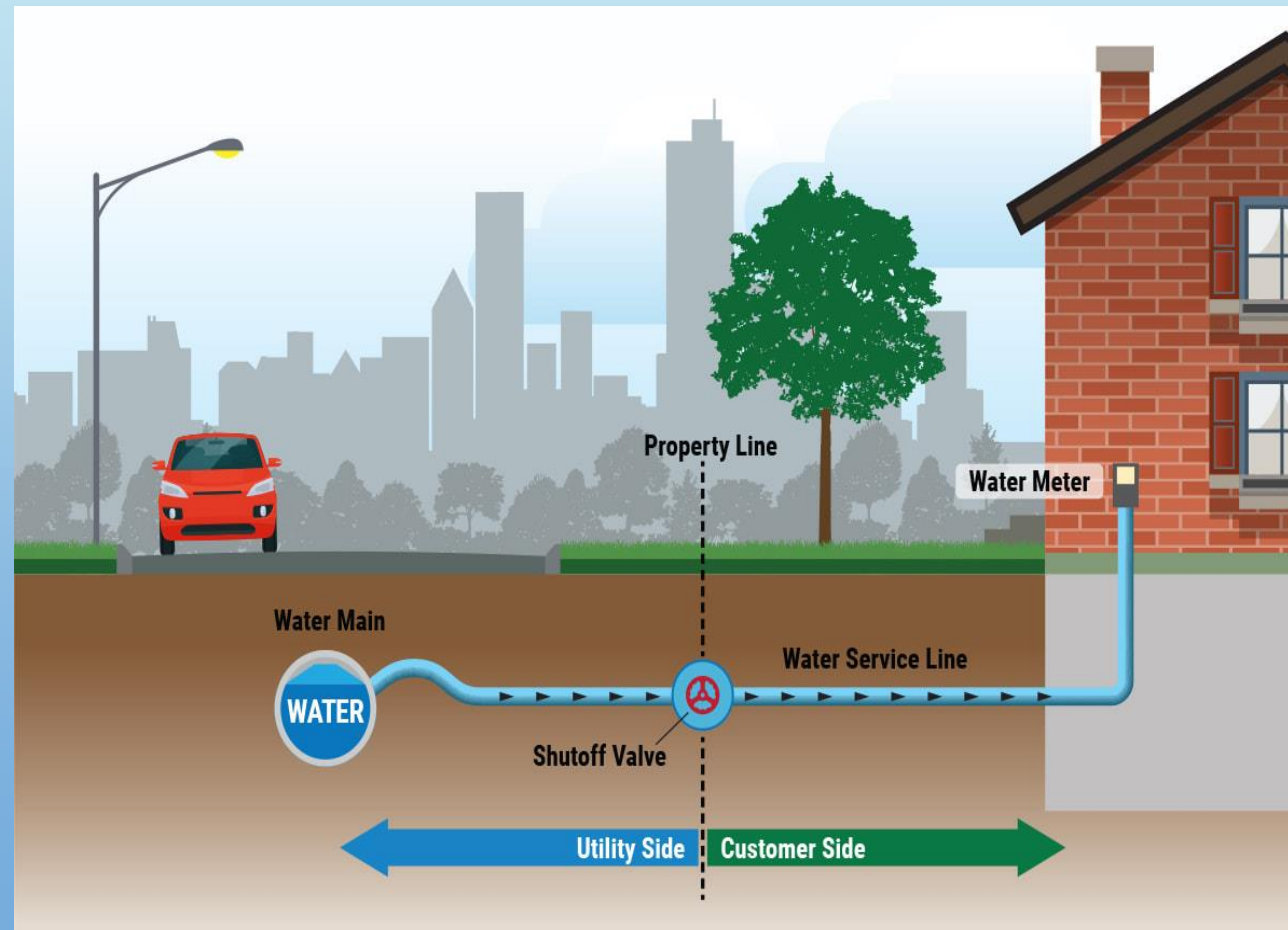
# BREWER WATER DEPARTMENT

IDENTIFYING YOUR WATER SERVICE LINE

# WHAT IS A WATER SERVICE LINE?

These are the underground pipes that connect water mains (the large pipes that carry the public water supply) to homes and other properties.

The section of pipe from the water main in the street to the curb stop (shut off valve) near the property line is considered “The Utility Side”



The section of pipe from the curb stop (shut off valve) to the house is considered “The Customer Side”

The only portion of a service line that can be identified without digging into the ground is the short piece of pipe inside your home that runs to the meter or main shut off valve.

# WHY DO I NEED TO IDENTIFY MY SERVICE LINE MATERIAL ?

Service Lines were commonly made of lead from the late 1800s through much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and fortunately, the State of Maine Plumbing Code enforced a lead ban for all service lines that became effective June 1, 1926.

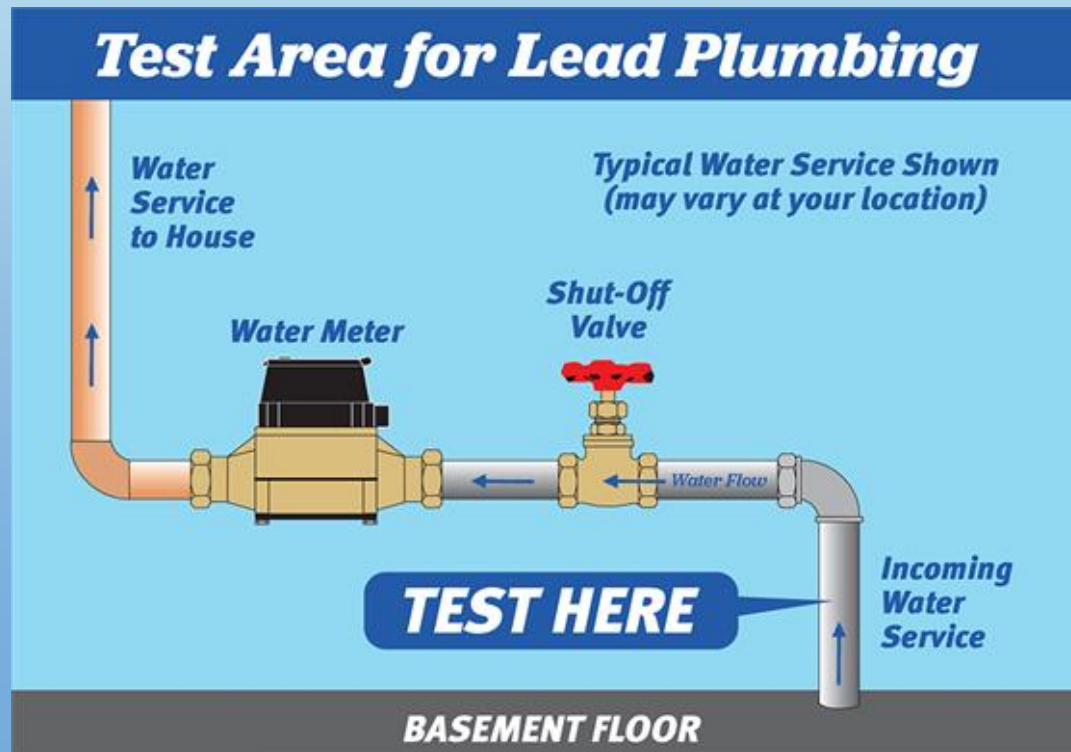
In 1986 Congress enacted an amendment to the Safe Water Drinking Act, officially prohibiting the installation of new lead service lines and other plumbing.

Service lines can also be made of copper, galvanized steel, or plastic.

Although the State of Maine falls in the low end range of lead service lines in the USA, we are required by federal law to maintain a service line inventory that identifies any potential lead service lines in our system.

# HOW DO I IDENTIFY MY SERVICE LINE MATERIAL ?

- If your home was built after 1988 with a new water connection, you can be confident that you do not have a lead service line.
- If your home or property first connected to the water service before 1988, there is a chance you may have a lead service line, even if your home was remodeled or replaced later.
- Locate where the service line comes into your house near the main shutoff valve.



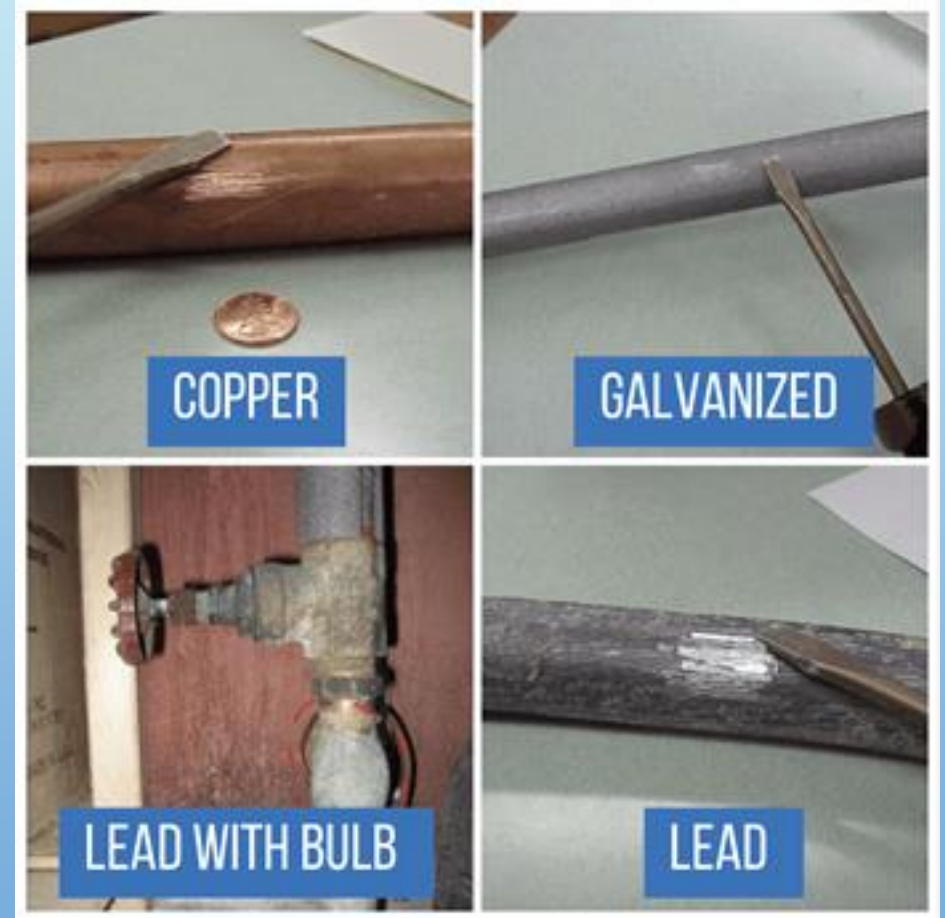
# HOW DO I IDENTIFY MY SERVICE LINE MATERIAL ?

When you find the service line gently scratch the surface of the pipe with a coin or screw driver.

**If the pipe is soft and easily scraped, silver in color, and if a magnet doesn't stick, it is lead.** (It may have a bulb in the pipe near the shutoff valve that looks like a snake that swallowed an egg.)

*If it's not lead, here are some ways to identify the material.*

1. If a magnet sticks, this portion of the service line is **galvanized steel**.
2. If it is copper-colored and a magnet doesn't stick, this portion of the service line is **copper**.
3. If the pipe is white or gray and the piping is joined with a clamp, screw, or glue, this portion of the service line is **plastic**.



# ANOTHER LOOK AT SERVICE LINE MATERIALS

## **Lead**



A dull, silver-gray color that is easily scratched with a coin.  
Use a magnet - strong magnets will *not* cling to lead pipes.

## **Galvanized**



A dull, silver-gray color. Use a magnet - strong magnets *will* typically cling to galvanized pipes.

## **Copper**



The color of a copper penny.

## **Plastic**



White, rigid pipe that is joined to water supply piping with a clamp.