

LEAD SERVICE LINES

The City of St. Francis received funding from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Safe Drinking Water Loan Program to assist property owners in replacing lead water service laterals on their private property.

Over the past few years, there has been a lot of information about possible issues with having a lead water service. A water service is the pipe that is connected to the watermain in the street and the water meter inside the house. There is a curb stop along this line. The curb stop is approximately at the curb but can often be located between the curb and the property line. The portion of the water service lateral between the watermain in the street and the curb stop is the public side of the water service lateral and is owned by the City of Milwaukee Water Works who owns and operates the water system in St. Francis. The portion of the water service lateral between the curb stop and the meter in the house is the private side which is the responsibility of the property owner.

The City of St. Francis obtained funding from the Wisconsin DNR to assist property owners with the replacement of the water service lateral if it is lead. Milwaukee Water Works has been working on replacing all the public lead water main and public side lead water services in St. Francis. The City of St. Francis property owners have an opportunity to replace the private side water service lateral if it is lead. This is a voluntary program. The City is not requiring that the private side lead water service lateral be replaced. Please note that this funding is only to replace the private side lead water service lateral to the meter. Any private plumbing that is lead piping beyond the meter into the home is NOT covered by this program and is the responsibility of the property owner.

The City was granted \$300,000 in 2017 and has been granted an additional \$150,000 in 2018 to assist property owners replace their private side lead water service lateral. The City has reviewed the funding and with trying to assist as many property owners as possible has decided to reimburse property owners who have a private side lead water service replaced by a City prequalified plumber up to \$5,000. Some replacements may be more and some may be less but the maximum reimbursement is \$5,000. The reimbursement is paid to the property owner. It is between the property owner and the prequalified plumber if payment must be made before the reimbursement is made. It will take between 60 and 90 days to provide the reimbursement to the property owner. We estimate that this funding will assist approximately 90 property owners. Currently we have approximately 45 property owners signed up and reimbursed from this program. **For more information regarding this program, please contact the Engineering Department at 414-481-2300.**

Letters have been sent to all property owners whose homes are suspected of having a private side lead water service lateral; however, if you are concerned, here is a simple test to see if you have a private side lead water service lateral. You can always contact a plumber for verification.

Lead Service Lines

Lead In Water: What You Should Know

The amount of lead in water will vary based on the plumbing in a building, how much water is used, and how often it is used. Homes and businesses built before 1951 were likely constructed with water service lines made of lead, which connect the building plumbing to water mains under the street. Lead can also be found in interior plumbing pipes, solder, and some plumbing fixtures.

IDENTIFYING A LEAD WATER SERVICE LINE

Tools needed: flathead screwdriver, and a refrigerator magnet

Lead pipes are dull gray in color and are soft enough to be easily scratched with a house key. A magnet will not stick to a lead pipe. A licensed plumber can determine if your water service line and/or plumbing are made of lead and can replace them for you. The water service line from the curb stop to the meter is eligible for the Wisconsin DNR funding. The lead piping after the meter into the home is at the property owner's cost.

Steps to Identify a Lead Water Service Line

1. Locate the water service pipe coming into the building (usually in the basement). An "inlet valve" and the water meter are installed on the pipe after the point of entry.
2. Identify a test area on the pipe between the point where it comes into the building and the inlet valve.
3. If the pipe is covered or wrapped, expose a small area of metal.
4. Use the flat edge of a screwdriver or other tool to scratch through any corrosion that might have built up on the outside of the pipe.



Lead Pipe



Photo courtesy of Madison Water Utility

If the scratched area is shiny and silver, your service line is lead. A magnet will not stick to a lead pipe.

Copper Pipe



Photo courtesy of Madison Water Utility

If the scratched area is copper in color, like a penny, your service line is copper. A magnet will not stick to copper pipe.

Galvanized Steel Pipe



Photo courtesy of Madison Water Utility

If the scratched area remains a dull gray, and a magnet will stick to the surface, your service line is galvanized steel.