



## Drinking Water Bureau

### Customer Outreach Guide: ID Private Water Service Line Material Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR)

#### Overview

All community and non-transient, non-community public water systems must develop a service line inventory that identifies the service line materials of the public water distribution system (“Systems”). The service line inventory shall be submitted to the New Mexico Environment Department, Drinking Water Bureau (“NMED”) by **October 16, 2024**.

Customer and private assistance to Systems is an important component in completing the service line inventory. NMED has created several customer communication templates that Systems can use for outreach to their customers. Systems may provide the three documents outlined below to customers via mail, email, or other methods.

It is recommended that in addition to these templates, water systems consider their own outreach to consumers including mail, water bills, social media, website posts, or informational door hangers & pamphlets.

#### Available Customer Communication Templates

NMED has created templates you can download, edit, and share with your customers:

<b>Customer Outreach Letter</b> (Attachment #1)	Provides a brief overview of the health effects of lead in drinking water and why customer service lien identification is important, contains a customer survey and weblinks for additional information. The template Word file can be edited to include your system contact information and any additional information you'd like to include.
<b>Customer Self-Identify Drinking Water Service Line Survey</b> (Attachment #2)	The survey is a guidance tool for customers to self-assess and verify the material of customer-owned service lines. The survey is then returned to the System. The template should be downloaded either as a Word file or a fillable PDF. Make sure to edit the document to include how to submit the completed survey and system contact information.
<b>Survey guidance-Water Service Line Material Identification</b> (Attachment #3)	Explains how to locate the drinking water service line and identify the line material. Make sure to include this document with the customer service line survey.



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### Outreach Best Practices & Recommendations for Effective Communication

Convincing your customers to participate in the customer service line survey can be a challenge. Ongoing and transparent communication with your customers can help increase public participation with service line identification and increase consumers' confidence in their tap water. Below are some recommendations from American Water Works Association's Lead Communications Guide and Toolkit to help you effectively communicate with your customers.

**Different Language Communities** – If significant portions of the population in your community speak languages other than English, the outreach materials must contain information in the appropriate language(s). Don't overlook any non-English media outlets for message dissemination.

**Taking Initiative** – Plan your outreach efforts in advance, test them, and evaluate them upon completion. Are you able to host a focus group with customers or internally to test the effectiveness of your outreach messaging?

**Different Forms of Outreach** – Customers may be more receptive to communication through different formats. Determine which is the best way to reach your customers. Can you provide outreach messaging through snail mail, email, website content, PDFs, door hangers, radio announcements, or phone calls?

**Power of Partnership** – Collaborating with other organizations and individuals is a great communications strategy. In times of crisis, community partners with established, trusted relationships with the audiences you need to reach will play a critical role in efficient message dissemination. Can you partner with the mayor's office, local schools, local clinics, civic groups, homeowner associations or community service organizations?

**Incentives** – Are you able to offer an incentive for completing the survey? A rebate to a water bill, or other incentives for submitting the survey may increase customer participation.

**Outreach Representatives** – Is there someone you can designate to speak to customers, officials, and media? Having one person designated to represent your system to the public makes it easier to provide timely and consistent information.

### Web Resources

New Mexico Environmental Department: [https://www.env.nm.gov/drinking\\_water/lead-and-copper-program/](https://www.env.nm.gov/drinking_water/lead-and-copper-program/)

American Water Works Association's Lead Communications Webpage and Resources: <https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Contaminants-of-Concern/Lead/Lead-Communications/Consumer-Tool>

American Water Works Association's Lead Communications Guide and Toolkit: <https://www.awwa.org/Portals/0/AWWA/Communications/2022LeadPageAssets/2022AWWA-LeadCommunicationsGuideAndToolkit.pdf>

EPA Webpage - Engaging with the Community on Lead Service Lines: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/engaging-community-lead-service-lines>

Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative – Communicating about Lead Service Line Webpage: <https://www.lslr-collaborative.org/communicating-about-lsls.html>

## Attachment #1

[Water System Name, Water System Number]  
[Date of Distribution of Flyer]

### **Subject: Customer survey to determine service line pipe materials**

Dear Valued Customer,

Your public water system is committed to protecting your health when it comes to the harmful health effects lead pipes can have on you and your family. To reduce your risk of lead exposure, drinking water system providers are now required by law to determine the material of all service line pipes leading up to any residence, commercial business, or other property. Since those pipes run on private property, we are requesting your help in determining what material your outdoor pipes are made of by filling out our survey. The material inventory we are creating does not involve any indoor pipes, only the pipework outside the home or premises.

The drinking water pipes leading up to your home or business can be made of a variety of materials: copper, PVC plastic, galvanized metal, or lead. If your property's pipe is made from lead or galvanized metal that may have been exposed to lead, there is risk of lead corroding into your drinking water. Therefore, identifying the material of your pipes is vital in determining if you are exposed to lead in your drinking water. If your property does have lead pipes or galvanized pipes that were once exposed to lead, then it is recommended that they are replaced following regulatory guidance to reduce lead exposure in your drinking water.

### **Customer Survey**

Please help us determine your service line material by completing the enclosed survey and required photo documentation. If you need help completing the survey, please email [***email address***], call us at [***number***], or visit [***website link***] to gain additional information.

Please return the completed survey with accompanying photos as soon as possible via email to [***email address***] or in person at [***address***] during [***hours available***]

### **Additional Information**

Please see the attached Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guide to reducing lead exposure.

Please visit the following websites:

- New Mexico Environmental Department, Drinking Water Bureau:  
[https://www.env.nm.gov/drinking\\_water/lead-and-copper-program/](https://www.env.nm.gov/drinking_water/lead-and-copper-program/)
- Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/lead>

We appreciate your assistance in this process!

Attachment #2 [ Please add your System name, contact email, contact phone #]

### Customer Water Service Line Survey

Please fill out the survey below and return the completed survey and attach photo documentation of the pipe that you tested to *[water system address and/or email address]*.

#### General Information

Customer name		Phone number	
Premise Address		Date of home/premise construction	
Email			

Have you had any service line repairs or replaced?  Yes  No

If yes, describe what work was done, the year and provide us with any supporting documentation your service personnel provided you with (itemized bills, photos, purchase orders, etc.):

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#### Water Service Line Identification

Please use the service line [identification guide](#) (Attachment #3) to assist with the following questions:

Select all materials that apply to your water service line pipe leading up to your home or premise?

<b>Copper</b>	<b>Plastic</b>	<b>Galvanized Steel or Iron</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Cannot locate my service line</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Select all the different methods you used to determine your service line material:

<b>Scratch test</b>	<b>Magnet test</b>	<b>Lead swab test</b>	<b>Visual inspection</b>	<b>Plumbing records</b>	<b>Qualified professional</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Qualified Professional certification number:

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Please attach photos of the service line you identified, scratch test or magnet test if applicable.

Please contact us for any assistance locating your water service line or determining its material, please contact *[insert name of water system & staff contact information]*

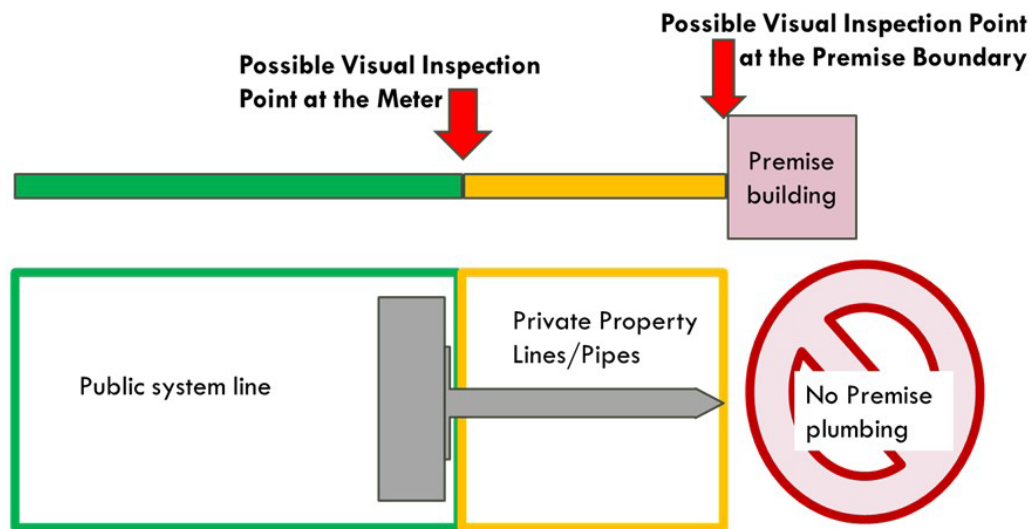
## Customer Service Line Material Identification Guide

### What are Water Service Lines and what materials could you have on your property?

A water service line is the pipe that carries water underground from a water main or well into a building. Water service lines can be made of a variety of materials: copper, plastic, galvanized or lead. The service line could also be a mix of several types, especially if repairs have been made to the line at different times in the building's history.

### Who owns the water service lines?

The water utility owns the public pipes that lead up to the what the property title determines is a private water line. In New Mexico, that is usually the property line. The image below indicates what your water service line might look like and the points you may visually inspect to determine the materials of the water pipe.







### Instructions on How to Determine your Pipe Material and Fill Out the Customer Survey

You may access this video guide on how to determine service line material in your premise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcO5FCE9Vfw>

1. Determine when your home was built and write it down in the survey.  
**Homes built before 1987 might have lead plumbing.** You can search the county assessor's office records or ask your clients to look at their property records to determine your home's build date.
2. Locate where your water pipe enters your building.  
The incoming water service in your home may come up from the basement floor or out of a wall in the basement. If you have a crawlspace, it will come out of the floor. If your house is on a slab, it will come up through the main floor, typically in a utility closet.

3. Do a scratch test on the water pipe you have identified.
  - Use a key or coin to scratch the pipe close to where it enters the house through the wall or floor.
  - If the pipe is painted, gently sand or scrape the paint away first to expose the metal.
  - What color is the pipe underneath?
  - If it is shiny and orange like a penny, you do not have a lead service line in your home.
  - If the pipe is grey, you may have a lead service line.
  
4. Do a magnet test.
  - Hold a magnet to your pipe.
  - If a magnet will stick, you have a steel service line.
  - You may also have plastic pipe which may be red, blue, black, or white. The magnet will not stick.
  - If a magnet won't stick, and it is not obviously plastic, you may have a lead service line.
  
5. Use the chart below to determine the material.

<b>What Does Your Service Line Look Like?</b>	
<b>COPPER</b>	 <p><b>Dull brown or greenish:</b> A magnet will not stick to a copper pipe. Scratch the pipe with a screwdriver or coin. If the scraped area is copper in color, like a penny, your service line is copper.</p>
<b>GALVANIZED STEEL</b>	 <p><b>Grey or silver:</b> A magnet will stick to a galvanized steel service line. If you scratch the pipe, it will remain a dull gray.</p>
<b>Plastic</b>	 <p><b>Red, blue, black, or white:</b> A magnet will not stick to a plastic pipe. A scratch test is not needed.</p>
<b>Lead</b>	 <p><b>Grey or silver:</b> A magnet will not stick to a lead pipe. Scratch the pipe with a screwdriver or coin. If the scraped area is shiny silver and flakes off, the service line is lead.</p>

Use this guide to identify what material your service line is made of.

**6. Determine if you have a lead line.**

- **IF THE PIPE REVEALS A DULL SILVER-GRAY COLOR WHEN SCRATCHED, AND IT IS NOT MAGNETIC, THE PIPE IS LIKELY MADE OF LEAD.**

**7. If you are unable to use the above methods** to determine the pipe material, here are some alternatives:

- Purchase an EPA-recognized lead swab kit online or at a home improvement store. These kits test the pipe material, not the water inside the pipes. Provide pictures of the plumbing line tested and color change results to your water provider.
- Ask a licensed plumber to inspect your pipes and determine the material type. Provide a copy of the inspection report to your water provider.

**Questions or concerns? Please contact:**

***[name of water system & staff contact name]***

Phone:

Email Address:

Mailing Address: