

Check for Lead in Your Home Plumbing

Your home's plumbing and faucets could have lead. This lead could get into your drinking water.

Plumbing in houses built before 1988 and faucets sold before 2014 are more likely to have lead. Check your plumbing for lead and make an informed decision about how to prevent lead in your drinking water.

Your home may have lead in the plumbing if it has one of the following:



- Lead or galvanized pipes; or
- A lead service line carrying water from the street to their residence; or
- Old faucets and fittings that were sold before 2014.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends that all residents across Michigan use a certified lead-reducing drinking water filter if their home has, or if they are uncertain it has, any of the things mentioned above.

To identify the material your pipes are made of, follow these steps:

1 Step 1: Gather what you need.

- A key or coin and a small magnet.
- Known location of the pipes and plumbing in your home.

2 Step 2: Do a scratch and magnet test.

These steps can only help you identify the material of the part of the service line inside your home and your interior plumbing. In some cases, the part of the service line outside your property might be owned by the city and could be made from a different material. To know what material connects your service line to the public water supply, contact your local water supply authority.



Lead pipes:

Scratch with a key—lead pipes will turn a shiny silver color and are easily scratched. Try the magnet—magnets will not stick to lead pipes.

Copper pipes:

Scratch with a key—copper pipes will turn a bright copper when scratched, like a new penny. Try the magnet—magnets will not stick to copper pipes.

Galvanized pipes:

Scratch with a key—galvanized pipes are hard and look dull when scratched. Try the magnet—magnets will stick to galvanized pipes.

Plastic pipes:

Scratch with a key—plastic pipes will sound dull when hit with the key and will not change color when scratched. Try the magnet—magnets will not stick to plastic pipes.

3 Step 3: Check your service line or well.

If your water comes from a community water supply:

- Locate the pipe coming out of your wall from the street to the home. This is typically found in the basement.
- A service line is only used on homes connected to a community water supply.
- Your interior plumbing is connected to the service line and water meter that goes to the rest of the home.
- Determine the material of your service line by contacting your local municipality.

If your water comes from a private residential well:

- Parts of your well—such as the pump, pipe, or valves—may contain lead. **Call a certified well-driller in your area to help you identify plumbing material used to build your well and the connection to the pressure tank in your basement.**
- Locate the pressure tank and pipes moving water in and out of the tank.
- The pipe moving water to the pressure tank is connected to a submersible pump of your well.
- Your interior plumbing of your home starts from the pipe moving water out of the pressure tank to your home.



To determine what material your service line is made from, you can do a scratch test and magnet test on that side of your water meter. To test your home's plumbing, you can do the scratch and magnet test on the plumbing on the other side of your water meter.

If you think your home may have lead in the plumbing:



MDHHS recommends these actions to reduce lead:

- Use a **NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for lead reduction and NSF/ANSI Standard 42 for particulates certified lead-reducing filter** for drinking water, cooking, rinsing foods, and mixing baby formula.
- Replace lead-containing faucets, fixtures, and plumbing.

To maintain your drinking water:



- **Keep your water moving** by doing everyday activities such as:
 - Taking a shower.
 - Running a load of laundry.
 - Flushing the toilet.
 - Washing dishes.
- **Clean the aerators** on your faucets at least once every six months to remove trapped debris.
- **Run your water** until it is cold before using it for drinking, cooking and making baby formula.



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