

Blackstone Water Department

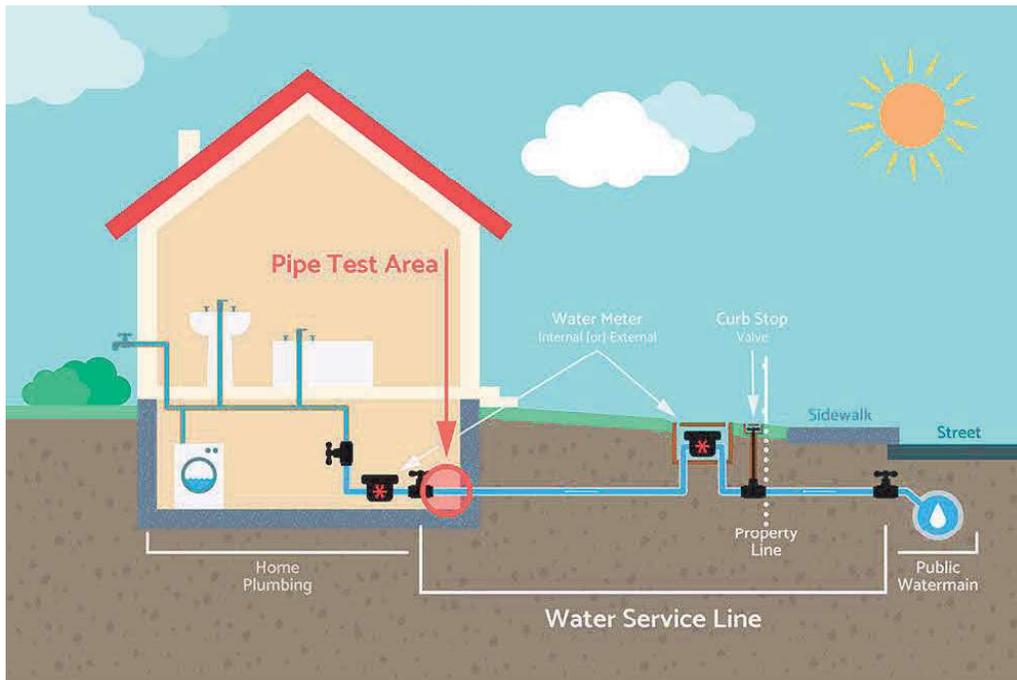
Lead Service Line Inventory Program

As part of the recent Lead and Copper Rule Updates, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandated that every public water supplier inventory the water service lines in their distribution system, primarily to identify and remove lead service lines.

The water service line is the pipe that brings water from the water main into your home. Service lines are typically made of plastic, copper, galvanized metal or lead. (A service line may also have different parts made of different materials.)

The LCRI recently released, further states that all the Blackstone Water Department's lead service lines need to be replaced by 2034. The Blackstone Water Department completed a full inventory of service lines connected to its distribution system. The results of the LSL inventory are available to the public on the town's website. Letters have been sent to property owners with known lead service lines and unknown material service lines. We are working with owners to determine their service material

The water service lines subject to the inventory are the homeowner-owned pipes between the water main and the water meter. Homeowners own the pipe between the curb stop and the water meter, in addition to the plumbing in the home.



In Blackstone there are over 2,700 homeowner-owned service lines. Of these, 3 are known lead service lines and 160 are made of unknown materials that are not likely to be lead.

If you have not received a letter, the Blackstone Water Department has determined your service line is not lead. Public water quality data is found in Water Quality Reports listed on our website. Our department received a grant from Mass DEP to complete the Lead Service Line Inventory.

The Blackstone Water Department collects lead samples from forty (40) residential properties each year. We also test two schools each year on a rotating schedule. All sample results are below the MCL, in fact, thirty-six (36) of the forty (40) samples are zero/not detected.

The Blackstone Water Division sent letters to the customers with unknown service lines with information on scheduling an appointment for the department to determine and document the water service line material. If you did not receive a letter the Blackstone Water Department has determined your service line is not lead.

The Blackstone Dept. of Public Works samples the water before it enters the homeowner-owned service lines at sites throughout Blackstone for both lead and copper. Public water quality data is found in Water Quality Reports listed on Blackstone website: <https://www.townofblackstone.org/>

What You Should Know About Lead

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups.

Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems. The EPA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention agree that “there is no known safe level of lead in a child’s blood.”

Blackstone’s water mains are made of ductile iron, cast iron, asbestos concrete and plastic, and do not add lead to water. However, lead can get into tap water through your service line if it is made of lead. Lead may also come from lead solder used to connect pipes in home plumbing, and from some faucets and fixtures. When lead is present in water, it is typically due to the water flowing through service lines or internal pipes. Because lead may pose serious health risks, both plumbing in buildings with lead pipes or plumbing with lead solder or brass.

If you think you have a lead service line and want to reduce your exposure to lead, you should do the following:

- **Test your water for lead:** The only way to determine the level of lead in the drinking water at your home is to have the water tested by a state certified laboratory. The cost to test is usually between \$10 and \$50. Consider having your paint tested also. A list of labs is available online at <http://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DEP/Labcert/Labcert.aspx> or you can call MassDEP at 978-682-5237 or e-mail Labcert@mass.gov.
- **Use only cold, fresh water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.** Run the water for at least 1 minute or until it turns cold.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead. Excessive boiling of water makes the lead and copper more concentrated – the lead and copper remains when the water evaporates.
- **Consider alternative sources or treatment of water.** If your water contains lead you may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. If considering a filter read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 800-NSF-8010 or www.nsf.org for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality. Also, if you are considering using bottled water, note that it may cost up to 1,000 times more than tap water. Simply flushing your tap, as described above, is usually a cheaper and equally effective alternative.
- **Check whether your home has a lead service line. IF YOU DO, HAVE IT REMOVED.**

Other things to consider:

- **Contact your health care provider or your local health department to find out if your child needs to be tested for lead.** A blood lead level test is the only way to know if your child is being exposed to lead. For more information on Massachusetts' childhood lead testing program, contact the Department of Public Health at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention-program> or at 1-800-532-9571.
- **If you have health concerns,** please contact your health care provider with any questions.
- **Bathing and showering should be safe** for you and your children, even if the water contains lead over EPA's action level. Human skin does not absorb lead in water.

For more information on lead see <https://www.mass.gov/lead-in-drinking-water>

Where to get more information

More specific information about the Lead and Copper Rule and its revisions may be found here:

<https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule>

More specific information about the water service line material verification directives may be found here:

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/revised-lead-and-copper-rule>

The EPA's response to the White House's December 2021 statement may be found here:

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-issues-guidance-help-communities-locate-lead-pipes-can-contaminate-drinking-water>

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The Blackstone Water Department is pleased to answer any question you may have about the service line inventory project. Please contact the Blackstone Water Department at 53 Elm St Blackstone, MA 01504 or (508) 883-9331. between the hours of 8:00 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Friday.

You may also contact the Mass DEP Drinking Water Program representative at (617) 292-5770 or program.director-dwp@mass.gov.