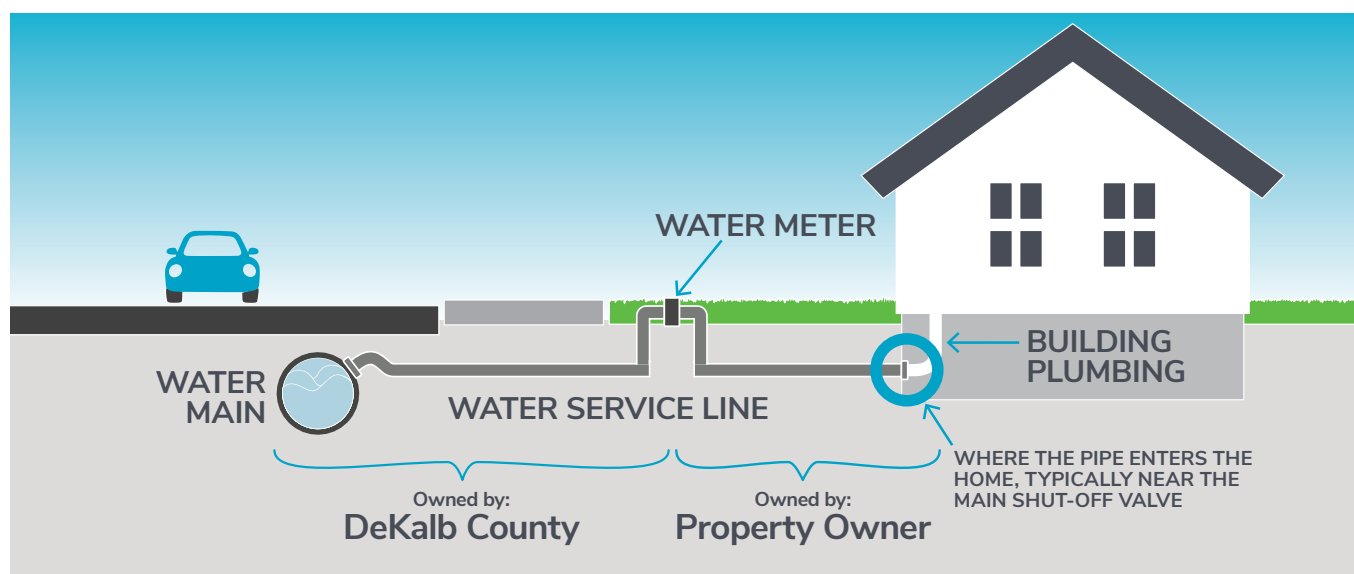




Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Water Service Line?

- A Water Service Line, also called a service line, carries water from the water main in the road to the inside of your home or building. The public side of the service line is the County's responsibility and goes from the water main to the homes property line at the water meter. The private side is the remaining service line and connects from the water meter to the water plumbing inside of the home. The piping inside the home or building is known as premise plumbing. Both the private side of the service line and the premise plumbing are the responsibility of the homeowner.



Who is responsible for the water service line on my property?

- DeKalb County is responsible for the service line from the main in the street to the meter, including the meter. The property owner is responsible for the service line from the meter to the connection to the plumbing inside the home.

What are the sources of lead in my drinking water?

- Service lines made of lead or galvanized steel can add lead to the drinking water, especially when the water is unused for long periods of time.
- Plumbing fixtures (faucets, valves, fittings, etc.) made before 2014 may contain a portion of lead. Indoor copper plumbing pipes may contain lead solder. Visit [Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water | US EPA](https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water) (<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>) for information about possible sources of lead in your home or building.
- The water leaving DeKalb County's water treatment facility does not contain lead.



Why does the water service line or plumbing fixture at my home contain lead?

- Lead was commonly used for water service lines until 1960 and in household plumbing fixtures and solder until 1988, when it was banned. From 1988 to 2014, plumbing fixtures could contain up to 8% lead to be categorized as, “Lead free”. However, current standards for “Lead free” fixtures allow no more than 0.25% of lead content.
- Many homes and buildings, especially those built before 1988, may have service lines and/or internal plumbing and fixtures that are made of or contain lead.

How can I find out if my service line is made of lead?

- Lead was banned for water service and plumbing in the state of Georgia in 1989, and so lead service lines may be found in homes built before the ban. You can look up your address to see if DeKalb has a record of your service line material at the ‘Check Your Line’ link on DeKalb County DWM’s website at <https://dekalbcountyga.gov/departments/watershed-management/business-services/lead-copper-rule-revisions-program>.

You may also determine the material yourself using our ‘Tips for Service Line Identification’ linked on our website and report your findings to us. If you are unsure, you may email photos of your service line for our technicians to review at LeadCopperRule@dekalbcountyga.gov.

Is my water safe to drink?

- The County’s water meets all state and federal requirements for water quality. When water leaves the County’s water treatment plant, it is clean and lead-free. The water mains underground that transport water from the treatment plant are made mostly of iron and steel which do not add lead to the drinking water. Lead can get into drinking water from the service line between the street and your home, or from the lead solder used in the plumbing inside your home. When water sits in the service line or your home plumbing without being used for several hours, the lead may dissolve into the water.

What types of materials can water service line be made of?

- Copper and plastic are the most common service line materials in homes in DeKalb County. Service lines can be made of lead, galvanized steel, plastic, brass, copper, cast iron or ductile iron.

How can I test my water for lead?

- A list of certified water testing labs is provided at the link ‘Test Your Water’ on DeKalb County DWM’s website at <https://dekalbcountyga.gov/departments/watershed-management/business-services/lead-copper-rule-revisions-program>.

What level of lead is safe to consume?

- All lead exposure has risk. Therefore, there is no identified safe level of lead.

How can I determine if there is lead or lead solder in my plumbing fixtures?

- Many homes and buildings, especially those built before 1990, may have internal plumbing and fixtures that are made of or contain lead. A licensed plumber can help figure out if you have lead material in your indoor plumbing. You can also use an EPA-approved lead test kit, such as those listed here:
 - <https://www.epa.gov/lead/lead-test-kits>

If I do the materials verification test (self ID) and cannot identify my service line material, what should I do?

- You may email photos of your service line to LeadCopperRule@dekalbcountyga.gov for a technician to review, or you may reach out to a DeKalb County Watershed Management representative for assistance with identifying your service line at 770-270-6243 or LeadCopperRule@dekalbcountyga.gov.

If my home has a lead service line or plumbing with lead solder, how can I protect myself right now?

- DeKalb County DWM has a Corrosion Control Program that minimize the release of lead from water pipes and solder. If you would like to take an additional step to protect yourself from lead, flush your system by running cold water for about 3-5 minutes whenever the water in your home has not been used for more than 6 hours. Furthermore, you can use a water filter that is certified to remove lead for your drinking and cooking water.

How do I find the water service line on my property?

- You can find your water service line by first finding the water heater. Trace one of the pipes back to the wall or floor of the house that is closest to the street. Usually there is a shutoff valve near the wall or floor. The section of the pipe that goes through the wall or street is the service line. The first few inches of this pipe are used to determine the material of the service line. This section of the water pipe may be in your crawl space.

How do I report my water service line material to DeKalb County?

- Completing the self-reporting survey will help DeKalb County track the materials within our water system at the 'Check Your Line' link on DeKalb County DWM's website at <https://dekalbcountyga.gov/departments/watershed-management/business-services/lead-copper-rule-revisions-program>.



How can lead affect my health?

- Exposure to high levels of lead is a serious health risk. Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells, and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children, pregnant women, and unborn babies. Amounts of lead that will not harm adults can slow down the normal mental and physical development of children, particularly those under 6 years old.

How can I decrease my lead exposure?

- While not required by law or by DeKalb DWM, replacement of your lead service line (if present) can reduce possible exposure to lead. Alternatively, you can take several actions to decrease your lead exposure, including:
 - Getting a National Sanitation Foundation (NSF)-Certified home water treatment device, faucet, or pitcher filter that removes lead. The device must be both NSF 42- and NSF 53- certified to remove lead. Devices and filters installed at the faucet will remove any lead contained in indoor plumbing and plumbing fixtures.
 - Buying plumbing fixtures (faucets, valves, sinks, hose bibs, etc.) that have zero- or low-lead content meeting the current “lead-free” requirements. Read the labels of any new plumbing fixtures closely.
 - Running tap water for about five minutes before you use it for drinking or cooking if the water has gone unused for more than 6 hours. In doing so, you are flushing the stagnated water and getting fresh water from the water main pipe.
 - Using fresh, cold, running water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.
 - Removing and cleaning faucet screens and aerators every 6 months.

Can I shower in lead contaminated water?

- Yes. Human skin does not absorb lead in water. Bathing and showering should be safe for you and your children, even if the water contains lead over EPA’s action level.

Where can I get more information about lead in drinking water?

- Visit the [EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule website](https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule)
<https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule>
- Visit the [Georgia Environmental Protection Division Drinking Water website](https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch/drinking-water)
<https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch/drinking-water>

Will DeKalb County replace my lead service line?

- Once the DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management has identified the service line materials within their system, a replacement plan will be established. The cost to the customer for replacement of the customer-owned portion of the service line is under review at this time.



QUESTIONS?



CALL: 770-270-6243

VISIT: www.dekalbcountyga.gov/departments/watershed-management/business-services/lead-copper-rule-revisions-program



DeKalb County
GEORGIA