



LEAD SERVICE REPLACEMENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water) replaces lead service lines in conjunction with scheduled infrastructure upgrades, known as Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), and upon the request of customers that choose to replace the private side pipe. DC Water also replaces lead service lines in coordination with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) repaving schedule.

UNDERSTANDING LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

Q. Why is it important to replace lead service lines?

A. Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters the body from drinking water or other sources. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. If you are pregnant and/or have children under the age of six, you should 1) drink filtered tap water and 2) use filtered tap water to prepare infant formula or concentrated juices until all sources of lead in drinking water are removed from your private property. For additional information on the health effects associated with lead in drinking water, visit EPA's website at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead/lead1.html.

Q. What are sources of lead in drinking water?

A. The lead pipe (service line) that connects the water main in the street to your household plumbing, as well as lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome plated brass faucets, and old galvanized household plumbing can release lead in drinking water.

Q. How can galvanized plumbing release lead in drinking water?

A. When a lead service line releases lead over many years, it accumulates on the corroded inside surfaces of household galvanized pipes. If you have replaced the full lead service line, galvanized pipes can continue to release lead until these pipes are replaced.

Q. How can I ensure lead is no longer released in my drinking water?

A. The removal of lead in drinking water is most effective if the full lead service line is removed from both the public and private property. If you choose not to replace your private side pipe, lead can continue to dissolve in your drinking water. You should also replace galvanized plumbing, older lead soldered pipes, and brass fixtures and use a different plumbing material in your home. Until all potential sources of lead in drinking water are removed from your private property, be sure to follow the flushing and filter instructions provided.

Q. What steps should I take after lead pipe replacement?

A. Following lead pipe replacement, you may experience a temporary, but significant increase in lead in your tap water. We recommend you immediately flush your plumbing for 60 minutes after construction is complete. For 30 days, you should flush your plumbing for 10 minutes and clean your aerator each day. For six months, filter tap water for drinking and cooking using the water filter provided by DC Water. Be sure to replace filtration cartridges as recommended by the manufacturer and periodically remove and clean faucet aerators.

After six months, if you are pregnant and/or have children under the age of six, you should continue to 1) drink filtered tap water and 2) use filtered tap water to prepare infant formula or concentrated juices until all sources of lead in drinking water are removed from the private property. In addition, if you have household galvanized plumbing, continue to use filtered tap water for all drinking and cooking purposes until galvanized pipes are replaced.

Q. During the six months after lead pipe replacement, when is filtered water necessary?

A. For six months, you should use filtered water for all cooking and drinking purposes, including water used for making ice, beverages, infant formula and concentrated juices.

Q. How can I confirm my home's water service pipe is lead?

A. Contact DC Water's Customer Service Line at (202) 354-3600 or email waterquality@dcwasa.com. We will check our database that shows pipe material for District addresses.

Q. Will DC Water test my water to ensure the lead levels have decreased?

A. DC Water will drop-off a free lead test kit about five months after lead pipe replacement.

Q. I would like an independent lab to test my water. Who can I contact?

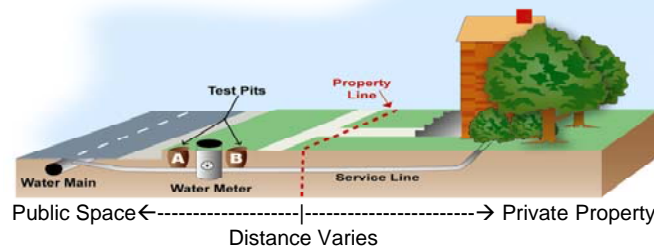
A. There are a number of state-certified independent labs in the Washington metropolitan area, including:

AMA Analytical Services, Inc.	Lanham, MD	301-459-2640
Anabell Environmental, Inc.	Gaithersburg, MD	301-548-9425
Chesapeake Analytical Laboratory, Inc.	Waldorf, MD	301-932-4775
WSSC, LSG	Silver Spring, MD	301-206-7580

CONSTRUCTION AND RESTORATION

Q. Where is the public space?

A. Public space includes the street, tree space, sidewalk, and very often what homeowners consider their front yard. In some areas of the District, the public space extends up to the face of the building or house. DC Water and the contractor will locate the private property lines by checking the records of the Washington D.C. Office of Public Space, Permits and Records Branch.



Q. Will there be digging in my yard?

A. To minimize digging, the contractor will use a trenchless technology wherever possible that pulls the pipe between a few holes. If you have signed the Agreement for DC Water to replace your private side pipe, we will dig test pits to determine the pipe material. If the test pit confirms you have a lead pipe on your property, it will be replaced. If the pipe is not lead, no further digging is necessary.

Q. What are the colored paint markings in my yard and on the street?

A. To prevent accidents, all contractors or property owners are required by law to call "Miss Utility" to locate and mark existing utility lines, prior to digging. You should move any special plantings when you see the "Miss Utility" markings. You should also locate, mark and **MAKE SURE YOU TELL THE CONTRACTOR** about underground items such as electronic dog fences or irrigation systems which may interfere with the lead service replacement.

Q. Will the fence, retaining wall, porch or hedges be disturbed during construction?

A. In most cases, these items will not be disturbed. However, if an older retaining wall near the work area is disturbed, the contractor will repair any damage. DC Water contractors take photographs of the repair area prior to replacement in order to restore the area properly.

Q. Who is responsible for repairing or replacing plumbing in my home?

A. The repair and replacement of private plumbing is the responsibility of the homeowner.

Q. How does DC Water treat older and historic trees when digging?

A. To avoid tree and root damage, contractors will use a special tool to minimize the impact of the pipe replacement. In special circumstances, DC Water will work with the DDOT tree expert/arborist to develop a plan and work around major roots.

Q. When will the roadway, sidewalk, and my yard be restored?

A. DC Water contractors will restore areas behind the curb within two weeks after pipe replacement (assuming no delays due to weather). For roadway repairs, the contractor will repair excavations made in the street within 60 days. For street repaving, some streets may require more than 60 days if additional work is scheduled and is dependant on weather conditions. If the block is listed on DDOT's repaving schedule, it may require up to one year before the street is repaved.

Q. Will DC Water's contractors replace grass with sod or seed?

A. Contractors restore lawns and tree boxes with grass seed.

Q. How will DC Water ensure historic brick sidewalks are properly restored?

A. DC Water requires that, when necessary, the contractor temporarily remove all brick and store it for reuse. When the same bricks are replaced after construction, the color may slightly vary. Occasionally, new brick may be used and will not match exactly.

Q. How does DC Water handle traffic during construction?

A. DC Water works closely with DDOT to prevent street closure and traffic disruptions during construction. In special circumstances, DDOT may require that the street be temporarily closed and appropriate signage will be posted to detour traffic. In most cases, there will be restrictions on parking spaces.

THE COST OF LEAD PIPE REPLACEMENT

Q. Who pays for private property replacement?

A. DC Water pays for lead pipe replacement in public space. Replacement of service pipes on private property is the homeowner's responsibility.

Q. Are there loans or grants available to pay for the private lead service replacement?

A. There are several options available for homeowners to pay for the private side lead pipe replacement, including payment in four monthly installments, payment in full, or if you are income-eligible, you may seek a grant up to \$5,000 from the DC Department of Housing and Community Development or a low interest loan from TD Bank.

Q. How is the price determined for replacing the lead pipe on my private property?

A. If your private lead pipe is replaced by DC Water's contractor at the same time as the public side; you will receive a reduced rate of \$100 per foot, in addition to a \$500 fee to connect the pipe to the household plumbing. For example, if you have 20 feet of private property in front of your house, the total cost would be \$2,500 (20 feet x \$100 = \$2,000 + \$500 = \$2,500).

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

DC Water's Customer Service Line at (202) 354-3600

Email waterquality@dcwater.com