



CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT Service Line Assurance Initiative

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Charles County Service Line Assurance Initiative?

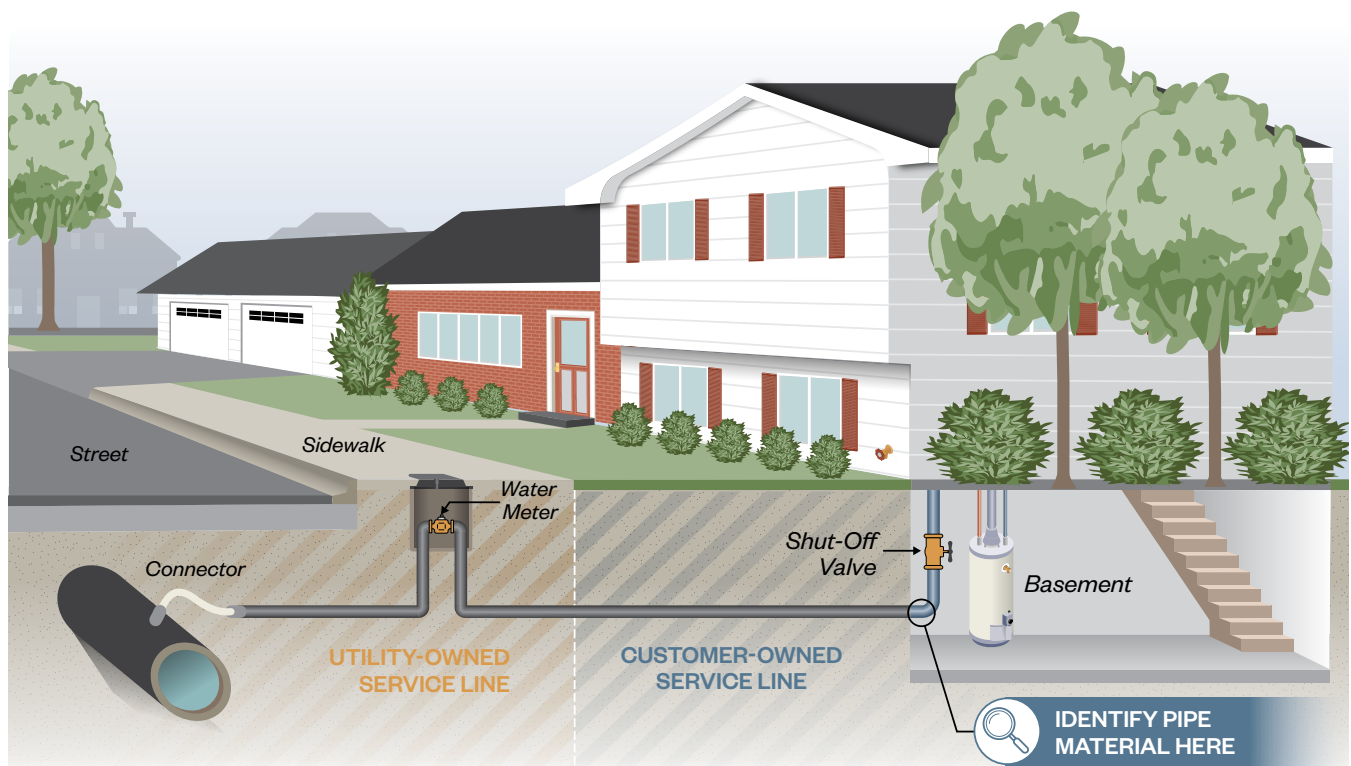
The Service Line Assurance Initiative was launched to proactively comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, which were issued in 2021. The main goals of the revised rule include submitting an inventory of the service lines in the Charles County water distribution system and providing our customers with transparent public education materials.

What is a water service line?

A service line is the underground pipe that connects your home to the water main.

Where can I locate my service line?

It can typically be seen where it enters your home in the basement or crawl space.



Do the revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule mean I have lead pipes?

No. A primary purpose of the revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule is simply to identify the material of all water service lines to enhance customer awareness. Identifying out-of-date materials, including lead, is the first step toward eliminating them from the distribution system.

Will this program affect my water bill?

No. The program does not impact the cost of water.

Where can I find more information regarding the Service Line Assurance Initiative?

All information can be found on the Service Line Assurance Initiative webpage: www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/SLAI.



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Water Quality

How does lead get into drinking water?

Lead is seldom found as a natural contaminant in drinking water and generally originates from lead-based plumbing materials. Lead can enter drinking water when plumbing materials containing lead corrode over time. These materials include pipes made of lead, lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, and brass and chrome-plated brass faucets. Lead service lines are typically the most significant source of lead in the water. In Maryland, these materials are more likely to be found in homes built before 1973.

Do all lead service lines contaminate drinking water?

Not necessarily. All lead service lines can potentially leach lead into drinking water, but Charles County carefully manages the water chemistry in the distribution system to help prevent this. Lead gets into drinking water through leaching from lead-containing pipe, faucets, and solder sometimes found in the plumbing of older buildings.

If a service line constructed with lead is identified on my property and then replaced, how can you ensure there is no longer lead in my water?

Charles County will give guidance on flushing the line after replacement and sample the water to ensure there is no lead coming from the service line.

If there are lead-based materials in my service line or premise plumbing, what steps can I take to reduce lead exposure?

Instructions on how to reduce lead exposure in drinking water can be found on the Service Line Assurance Initiative webpage: www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/SLAI.

Why is it necessary for me to self-report the material of my service line?

The portion of the water service line between your water meter or curb stop and your home was not installed by Charles County, so there is limited information about the

material used. The LCRR requires an inventory of the entire service line, including the portion owned by the customer. By verifying the material of your service line, you are helping to comply with the regulation and identify any outdated service line materials.

Are all residential, commercial, and industrial property owners being asked to complete the survey?

No, only customers at locations where the service line material is still unknown are being asked to complete the survey.

How do I know if my service line material is unknown?

Charles County is developing a geospatial map that customers can access from the Service Line Assurance Initiative webpage once the self-reporting survey has been launched. The map will allow customers to look up their address and check the material of their service line. If it is listed as unknown, they will be prompted to take the survey.

How do I determine what material my water service line is made of?

Instructions for identifying your service line material can be found in the Survey and Resources sections of the Service Line Assurance Initiative webpage once the survey has been launched.

What will Charles County do with the survey results?

Validated service line material information will be added to the inventory submitted to MDE. Service lines constructed of outdated materials will be flagged for replacement.

Will my personal information be shared?

No. Personal information will not be shared. Only public information regarding your service line material will be



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published to the Service Line Assurance Initiative web-page and submitted to MDE. This information includes the verified service line material, date of construction, and physical address. Responses will only be used for the purpose of complying with the LCRR.

What happens if I determine I have a lead service line?

If you determine you have a lead service line, first do not panic. All lead service lines have the potential to leach lead into drinking water, but we carefully manage the water chemistry in the distribution system to prevent this from happening. Please notify the Charles County Government Utilities Office at 301-609-7400 and we will provide guidance on replacement.

Will my water service line need to be replaced?

Replacement is only necessary only if one of the following conditions are met:

- The service line was constructed with lead
- The service line is galvanized and downstream of a service line with unknown material
- If the service line is galvanized and is either currently, or was previously, downstream of a lead service line

What is a galvanized service line?

Galvanized pipes are iron pipes that have been dipped in a protective zinc coating to prevent corrosion and rust. Galvanized pipe was used as an alternative to lead pipe for water supply service lines. Galvanized service lines can capture lead released from upstream lead service lines. This stored lead can be released into the home, which is why this service line type may require replacement and be categorized as GRR (see graphic to the right).

Do all galvanized water service lines need to be replaced?

No. Only galvanized service lines that are currently or were previously downstream of a lead service line will need to be replaced.

Will my water service be interrupted should my water service line require replacement?

Should your service line need to be replaced, there will be a temporary interruption in service. Workers will try to minimize the duration of the interruption as the new piping is installed.

How long will it take to replace the water service line? What materials will be used?

The replacement of a water service should typically be done in one day. Type "K" copper tubing will be used for any new water services being installed.

