City of Hart
407 State Street
Hart, MI 49420

Understanding Your Water Service Line and Notification Letter

January 21, 2025

Why did I receive a letter about my service line?
New Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) regulations require us to notify all customers served through a water service line made of lead, galvanized steel that is or was downstream of lead, or unknown materials. It is meant to explain the health risks of lead exposure, share simple precautions that can be taken to minimize exposure, and where to find more information.

The letter **does not** mean that lead is present in your drinking water. Starting in 2025, EGLE requires all public water systems to send this notification to customers annually. New customers will also receive a copy when they begin service. You will continue to receive a copy of this letter each year until your service line material is confirmed to be non-lead or is replaced unless it is determined it does not have to be replaced.

Is my water safe to drink?

The Hart City Water Department treats, tests, and distributes high-quality drinking water to you and the community. Water provided by the Hart Water Department is lead-free when it leaves our wells.

We regularly test our water for lead and other contaminants in accordance with EGLE standards. Our water consistently meets or exceeds all federal and state safety standards, and in all of our sampling, lead levels have NEVER exceeded the EGLE's regulation level.

How can lead get into drinking water?

After water leaves The Hart Water Department water distribution system, it may be exposed to lead as it flows through privately-owned water service lines and indoor plumbing and fixtures. The Hart Water Department routinely tests water at multiple sites throughout the entire water distribution system to confirm the water meets all state and federal requirements, including lead and copper limits. However, like all public water systems across the United States right now, we are diligently working to find and remove all lead service lines that could pose any health risk to our community.

Are all homes at risk?

No. We are specifically concerned about water service lines made of lead, or galvanized steel pipe that may have been attached to a lead connector or 'gooseneck', which is a short flexible piece of lead pipe that was commonly used to connect service lines to water mains. Many homes and non-residential buildings we serve do not have these, but it is possible that some do.

Can I have my water tested?

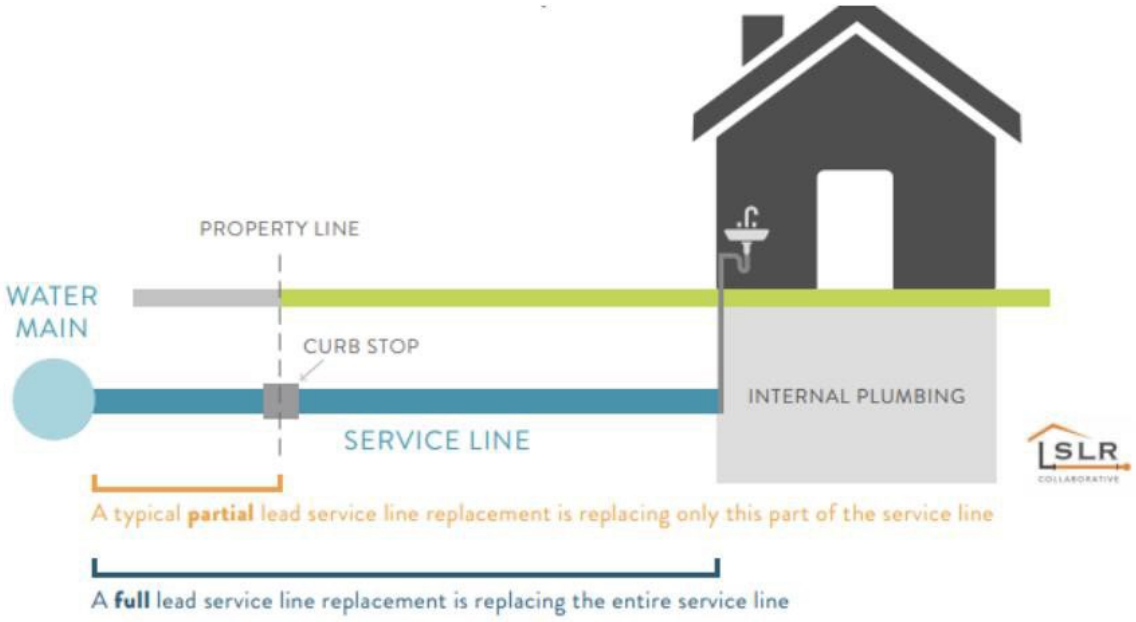
If you wish to test your water and learn more about the potential lead levels in your home or business drinking water, lead test kits are readily available from most local hardware stores.

More information is available at: www.Michigan.Gov/MILeadSafe

What exactly is a water service line?

The water service line is the pipe that connects a home or other types of buildings to The Hart Water Department-owned water distribution system. The Hart Water Department water mains typically run underneath streets and alleys or off to the side in the public road right-of-way. The water mains feed individual service lines that run to a meter. The service line then continues from the meter inside the building and connects to the interior plumbing. Customer service lines are commonly made of copper, PVC or other types of plastic and galvanized steel and some could be lead.

The illustration below shows how a water service line connects individual customers to water mains and the list below it includes information about other potential sources of lead in the home.



1) Lead pipes and solder may be found inside homes and other structures built before 1989.
2) Your plumbing fixtures and faucets could contain small amounts of lead.
3) Other potential sources of lead in a home include lead-based paint, dust, soil, jewelry, ammunition, fishing tackle, old ceramics, and some plastics. It has also been found in imported cosmetics, spices and food products from poorly regulated countries.

If I did not receive a letter from the City of Hart regarding my water service, is there anything else I need to worry about?

Maybe. It's also possible your interior plumbing contains lead pipe, lead solder or older brass fixtures with some lead content.

Who owns and maintains water service lines?

When a service line breaks between the curb stop and the building, it is the property owner's responsibility to have it fixed or replaced. The property owner owns the water service line all the way from the curb stop to their building. The Hart Water Department owns the water meter and the water service line from the water main to the curb stop.
The Hart Water Department maintains the section of the service line that runs from the water main to the curb stop and will replace this part of the service line if it is found to be lead or galvanized steel connected to a lead gooseneck.

How can I find out if my service line contains lead?

The Hart Water Department has built an inventory of water service lines connected to its system following new EGLE Lead and Copper rules. This includes researching historical records and conducting on-site investigations to confirm the presence or absence of lead.

If you are anxious about having lead, especially if you live in an older home, you may consider hiring your own plumber to complete an inspection of all lines inside your building.

How do I protect myself from lead?

If you have a service line made of lead or galvanized steel requiring replacement, or if you want to take extra measures to protect yourself in the event you have any lead in your interior plumbing and fixtures, here are simple measures that can be taken to reduce your risk.

- **Replace plumbing materials containing lead and safely remove lead paint.** Contact us to let us know if you plan to replace your line. Also consider replacing brass faucets, fittings, and valves in your building plumbing that contain lead. If you believe you have lead paint, hire a professional to safely remove it.
- **Run the cold water to flush out lead.** The longer the water sits on leaded plumbing, the more lead it may contain. Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours.
- **Use cold, flushed water for cooking and preparing baby formula.** Lead can dissolve in hot water more easily than in cold water. **Note that boiling water does not remove lead.**
- **Remove and clean aerators/screens on plumbing fixtures.** Over time, lead sediment can collect in aerator screens. Remove and clean aerator screens at least twice a year by soaking the screen in vinegar and scrubbing it with a toothbrush.
- **Test your water for lead.** State-approved commercial labs provide water testing kits for lead. Like lead swabs, water testing may help you identify sources of lead in your building plumbing.
- **Get your child tested.** If you believe your child has been exposed to lead, contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how to order a blood test.
- **Purchase a water filter.** Some water filters are designed to remove lead from your tap water. Read the package to be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead.

I am worried about other sources of lead in my home, or that someone may have been harmed by lead. What can I do?

The following are other potential sources of lead:

1) Lead pipes and solder may be found inside homes and other structures built before 1989.
2) Your plumbing fixtures and faucets could contain small amounts of lead.
3) Other potential sources of lead in a home include lead-based paint, dust, soil, jewelry, ammunition, fishing tackle, old ceramics, and some plastics. It has also been found in imported cosmetics, spices and food products from poorly regulated countries.

Tips to reduce lead exposure in your home:

a) Inspect your in-home water treatment devices, including water softeners and replace filters following manufacturer's recommendations. They may store and release lead into your water if not maintained properly.
b) Filter your water. Use a water filter that is ANSI/NSF 53 certified for lead removal. Many filters and filter systems can improve water quality and taste in other ways too.
c) Always use cold tap water for drinking and prEGLEring food. Lead may settle and concentrate in hot water tanks. Hot water is more likely to dissolve lead from solder and brass fittings.
d) Regularly clean faucet aerators. Aerators can collect particles from lead plumbing and should be removed and cleaned on a regular basis. It is especially important after household plumbing work and rEGLEirs. After removing the aerator, flush the cold-water lines for 5 minutes.
e) Flush your tap for at least 5 minutes before drinking or cooking if the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than 6 hours. This will prevent consuming water that has sat exposed to any lead. If you have a known lead service line and your house is set far back from the street, you may need to flush longer. After flushing, use the water for cooking or drinking, or save it in pitchers.
f) Install lead-free faucets and fixtures that are certified to contain no lead. Look for lead certification marks indicating the new product is lead-free, and then replace old faucets and fixtures. Visit nepis.EGLE.gov and search for lead-free certification for more information.
g) Ensure other sources of lead in your home have been removed or properly managed. Consider having your home checked for paint made before 1978, and faucets installed before 1989. Test and remove (or restrict access to) other household items that could contain lead. Be wary of poorly regulated products from overseas, including plastics, beauty products and spices. Check the CDC website to learn about food and consumer products recalled for lead.

If The Hart Water Department determines a home or business has a lead service line or galvanized line requiring replacement, will it be replaced?

The City of Hart Water Department will be replacing a minimum of 5% (minimum) of all lead service lines annually. EGLE has proposed requiring all public water systems to ensure these service lines are replaced no later than 2037. The Hart Water Department intends to finish this work as soon as possible ahead of the 2037 deadline.

Modern plumbing materials like copper, PVC, and PEX are safer and more durable. Replacing lead pipes and galvanized pipes in your home or business downstream of lead pipes, further reduces the risk of lead exposure.

More information is available at: www.Michigan.Gov/MILeadSafe