

WATER SERVICE LINE INVENTORY

Frequently Asked Questions

As the Water Service Line Inventory is conducted, below are some questions that residents may have about the project.

What is a Water Service Line Inventory?

New state and federal regulations about lead in drinking water are requiring municipal water suppliers to inventory the material of all water service lines in their jurisdiction. After the inventory, the municipal water supplier will establish an action plan to replace any identified lead water service lines. Replacement projects would occur at a future time and may be eligible for additional grant funding.

Who will be coming to inspect?

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has hired Bolton & Menk, a civil engineering company with offices throughout Minnesota, including Sleepy Eye, St. Cloud, and Willmar, to complete the inventory. The inspector that comes to your house will be from Bolton & Menk, and they will be wearing a yellow Bolton & Menk vest.

What does the inspection entail?

The inspection at a single house should only take 5 minutes. The inspector simply needs to visually inspect the material of the water service line that is coming into your home. They will take a photo of the water service line to confirm and record the material of the water service line that is entering your home.

Why do you need a photo?

We need a photo of the water service line to confirm and record the material of the water service line that is entering your home. We cannot consider a self-inspection or an inspection conducted by Bolton & Menk complete without photo evidence. The photo should only be taken to the extent of the water service line.

My pipe is in a crawl space; can you inspect that?

Unfortunately, we cannot conduct inspections in crawl spaces at this time. We are requesting that you conduct the self-inspection and submit the information. Keep in mind we will need a well-lit, clear photo of the water meter and the service line material that first enters the property, so we are able to visually confirm the material of the service line.

How do I know what type of pipes I have?

Check the guide below to see what type of pipes you may have. If you are unsure and need assistance, you can also ask the inspector what they found during the inspection.

LEAD

A dull, silver-gray color that is easily scratched with a coin. Use a magnet to detect the material – strong magnets will not cling to lead pipes.



GALVANIZED

A dull, silver-gray color. Use a magnet to detect the material – strong magnets will typically cling to galvanized pipes.



PLASTIC

Blue or black pipe.



COPPER

The color of a penny.



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When will the inspections take place?

Inspections will start this month and will be completed by the end of October. If you would prefer to schedule an inspection, please contact us at 320-434-1034.

What is the cost?

There is no cost to you. The inspectors have been hired by MDH to complete this inventory. All you need to do is complete the self-inspection or allow Bolton & Menk to access your home to complete the inspection for you.

Can you do plumbing work for me while you're here?

No, no work is being completed as a part of these inspections. The purpose of these inspections is to record the material of the water service line that is coming into your home for future replacement of any confirmed lead service lines.

Do I need to be there to let the inspector in?

Yes, an inspector will not enter your home without you being present. If you are not home when the inspector stops by, they will leave a card behind for you to schedule a time for the inspection. If you'd prefer, you can also complete a self-inspection by visiting your city's website or contacting us at 320-434-1034.

Do I need to plan for replacement of anything, due to damage during the inspection?

No. Nothing in your home should be damaged or need replacement due to the inspection. The inspector may need to perform the "scratch test" if they are inspecting a metal pipe to determine its material, but that will not cause any damage to the pipe. Other than the "scratch test," the inspector will only conduct a visual inspection of your water service line.

I don't know how to use a QR code; can you help me?

You can scan a QR code with the camera on your smartphone. Simply open the camera and hover it about 6-10 inches over the QR code, but don't take a picture. A link to your city's inventory website should appear, and you can click the link to open it. At the top of this website, you can click on the button to take the self-assessment survey.

If you do not have a smart phone, or prefer not to use a QR code, you can simply visit the website link provided on the doorhanger to access the online survey. If you would prefer not to complete the self-inspection, an inspector will be visiting your home, or you can contact us to schedule your inspection ahead of time at 320-434-1034.

What happens after my inspection is complete?

Once your inspection is complete, this data will be compiled and submitted to MDH. This data will further inform the municipal water supplier's action plan to replace any lead water service lines found. The inventory and action plan are critical first steps for the municipal water supplier to be eligible for additional grant funds for future water service line replacement.

**Your cooperation is vital to the success of this project.
If you have any questions, please reach out at 320-434-1034.**