

HELP THE CITY COMPLETE THE LEAD AND COPPER INVENTORY

Since the events that took place in Flint, Michigan beginning in 2014, our leaders have been looking more closely at how we deal with lead in our water pipes. Lead was a common material years ago for water systems before the dangers were known about the health effects. In 1986, lead was banned in North Carolina for water lines, but it was still a component of some connection parts in small percentages. Copper pipes can be a concern because of the lead solder used to fuse the pieces together. Older ones can contain high percentages of lead. Since so many mistakes occurred in Flint, new rules have been created to help water systems identify and fix potential problems before another crisis occurs. The Lead and Copper Inventory is the new requirement for every system to collect data on all connections to determine the pipe material on both sides of the meter. Some information can be gathered from historical records, tax information, or building inspection reports, but a lot will remain unknown. That's where we need your help. While we are gathering what we can find on our side of the meter, we need help determining what is on your side of the meter.

The city regularly analyses the water for lead and copper, and these results have never shown any results to be concerned about. We also coat the pipes to keep these elements from leaching out, but age and wear can still be a hindrance. Whenever our city crews work on water lines and find anything that contains lead, they either immediately replace it or come back soon after to correct the problem. Unfortunately, they don't know where all the areas are that may contain lead pipes or materials. There are still some areas that predate our records, but we are working diligently to fill in the gaps. One area we have not had access to is information on the customer's materials. Houses built after the ban in 1986 are not a concern, but most of the houses in Eden were built before the ban. Tax records can help us determine the age of each house along with inspection records for home improvements. However, it is limited information. This is where your help is needed. **If you know the pipe material and size going from your house to your meter box, we would like you to share that information with us.**

Copper pipe is easy to spot by its shiny, copper in color appearance. Galvanized and lead pipes will be a little harder to distinguish. Lead pipe is typically dull but will be shiny if you scratch it with a metal object. Galvanized pipe could appear similar to lead or completely different, depending on the age of the pipe. The key difference between the two is that a strong refrigerator magnet will stick to galvanized pipe but not to any other pipe type. Newer homes may even have plastic pipes, so that should be even easier to identify.

To assist us further with our inventory, we have contracted 120 Water to help complete what we can't. In the next few months, postcards will be sent to households that still have unidentified pipe material to try to get more responses. If that isn't enough, then a company will be sent out to "pothole" or dig around meters to identify the material themselves. This is a time consuming and expensive endeavor, but necessary to meet the requirements. **Again, any information that can be provided by our citizens can help reduce this cost.** To share information, you can call the city at 336-623-2110 or email through the website. Please state that the information is for the Lead and Copper Inventory. Thanks to all who can help!