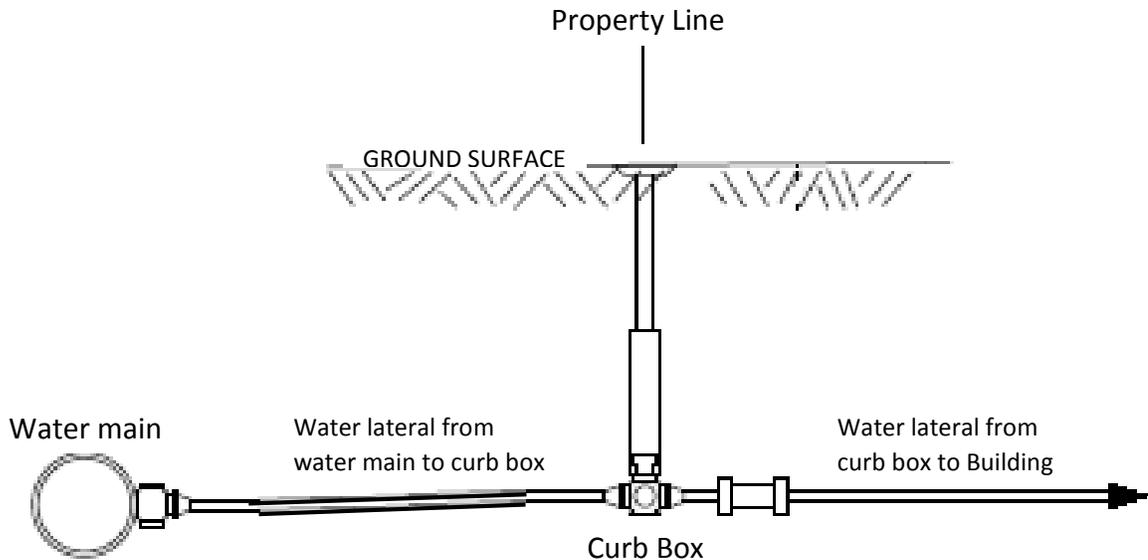


WATER SERVICE LATERALS FAQ's

1. **What is a water service lateral?** – The water service lateral is the pipe that provides water from the water main in the street to a home or business. For residences this pipe is usually 1 inch in size and runs from the water main into the home where the water meter is installed. A typical water service lateral includes a tap at the main, a length of pipe to a location at or near the street right-of-way line, a curb stop and box, and another length of pipe into the building being served. A diagram showing a typical service lateral is shown below:



2. **What is the curb stop and box?** The curb stop is a valve that allows the service to be turned on or off near the street right-of-way line. Since the curb stop itself and all of the lateral pipe is buried between 6 and 8 feet below the ground surface, the only evidence the curb stop is located below is the cover of the curb “box.” The curb box is a specially constructed metal tube that allows an operating wrench to be inserted into the curb box and onto the curb stop from above ground after removing the curb box cover.



Top of Curb Box as seen from Above

3. **Who is responsible for the ownership, maintenance, and repair of a water service lateral?** – The cost of the initial installation of a water service lateral is the responsibility of the customer. After the initial installation, the standard water industry practice is that the part of the water service lateral between the main and the curb stop is owned and maintained by the utility. The part of the service lateral from the curb stop to the building is owned and maintained by the customer. The curb stop is the boundary between the two parts of the service lateral.
4. **How does the curb stop tell us who is responsible for a leak repair?** – Since the utility portion of the service lateral is always under pressure between the main and the curb stop any leak on that part of the line cannot be controlled (turned off) without digging up the service lateral. If there is a question about a leaking service lateral, the curb stop would be turned off. If the leak does not stop, the repairs would be the responsibility of the utility. If the leak can be stopped, the repairs would be the responsibility of the customer.
5. **What type of materials are service laterals made of?** – In the Village of Weston and other areas served by Weston Municipal Utilities, all original service laterals for residences installed before 2006 are made of copper on both the utility and customer portions. In 2006, the utility began allowing other non-metallic service line materials to be installed on the customer portion of the service lateral. The utility limited these materials to high density polyethylene (HDPE) and aqua-PEX (or simply PEX). This was in recognition of the cost of copper relative to the cost of the non-metallic materials. If your home was constructed after 2005 or if the customer portion of the service lateral was replaced after 2005, there is a chance the customer portion of the service lateral is made of non-metallic material.
6. **How can I determine if my portion of the lateral is non-metallic?** – The utility has records of the majority of service lateral installations and you may request this information by contacting the utility office during normal business hours at 715-359-2876 or via email at pw@westonwi.gov. A [map](#) showing the location of non-metallic services is on our website. You may also be able to answer this question by simply observing the pipe that enters your home or business on the inlet (street) side of the meter. You should be able to easily see if the pipe that enters from the floor or through the wall is non-metallic (either a solid black plastic or white plastic with braided reinforcement).
7. **What are the problems with copper vs. non-metallic (i.e. plastic) service lateral materials?** – Non-metallic service lateral materials do not conduct electrical current. Therefore, unless a tracing wire is installed along with them, they cannot be located with conventional equipment used for that purpose. This is important for any excavating done on private property or in easements between the curb stop and the home/building. Non-metallic service laterals also cannot be thawed with a welder – the traditional method of thawing water service laterals that may freeze due to extreme cold weather. For more

information on frozen laterals please see the FAQ's on Frozen Water Service Laterals elsewhere on this website.

8. **Why would non-metallic material have been used on my portion of the water service lateral?** – The most likely reason for installing non-metallic material was the cost savings on the non-metallic material as compared to copper.

9. **What kind of access do I need to provide for my Water Meter?** – Water meters should be easily accessible. The utility will need to be able to access your meter occasionally in order to change the meter and troubleshoot problems with meter reading. In the case of a frozen lateral, access to the meter is necessary in order to thaw out the lateral line. If you choose to finish around the meter please be aware access to the meter needs to be available and if there ever is a problem with the meter it is likely that water will be sprayed from the meter area.