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# Safer Home Fact Kit

## Choosing Residential Plumbing Material

Many choices exist today when selecting materials for residential plumbing projects. How does a homeowner decide which one is best for their needs? Here is information about two popular choices available to consumers today.

### Copper

Copper tubing is still widely used today in residential plumbing projects. Professional installation or some plumbing knowledge is usually needed, however, as the use of solder or compression fittings is necessary to join the sections of pipe.

If the pH of the water is below 6.5, excessive amounts of copper could potentially leach into the water. To protect against copper leaching, existing copper pipes can be lined with a potable water epoxy coating to act as a barrier. Or, an acid neutralizer can be installed to raise the water's pH level. Many home water treatment systems are also available to help reduce excess copper levels from drinking water.

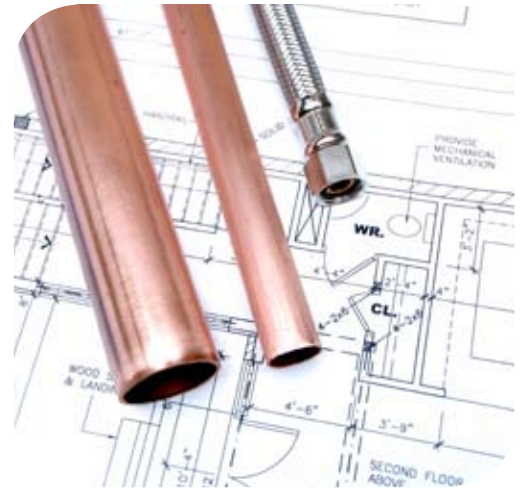
### Plastic

Plastic plumbing, including PEX, PVC and CPVC, is also frequently used for household plumbing. Because not all plastic materials are suitable for drinking water purposes, it is important that these products be certified for the intended end use application. Independent standards are in place to address design and construction issues related to plumbing products produced from plastic, including those intended for use in drinking water applications.

### Importance of NSF/ANSI Standard 61

Because water can pick up impurities from any material that it touches, all plumbing products used in a home's drinking water supply system should be certified to meet NSF/ANSI Standard 61.

This standard limits the potential introduction of impurities from plumbing materials. If the plumbing product is not certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 61, it may not be meant for use in drinking water applications.



*When selecting plumbing for drinking water uses, look for the NSF-pw or NSF-61 designations.*

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