

# *Sampling Protocol for Drinking Water in Schools*



*A Guidance Document for  
Drinking Water Testing*



- ❖ Schools must use an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) accredited laboratory for the testing.
- ❖ Schools must provide the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) with sample results within 7 days of receipt. Results should be emailed to [DPH.LeadH2O@illinois.gov](mailto:DPH.LeadH2O@illinois.gov).

**SB 0550** was signed by Governor Bruce Rauner on January 16, 2017. It requires all schools (Pre-K through 5th grade) to test for lead in water used for drinking and cooking. Schools built after January 1, 2000 are not required to test at this time.

**Sampling must be completed by:**

- ❖ December 31, 2017 — Schools constructed prior to January 1, 1987
- ❖ December 31, 2018 — Schools constructed between January 2, 1987 and January 1, 2000



# *Action Steps Prior to Sampling*

1. Your local water supply can be a great resource. Contact them to request assistance in establishing your sampling plan.
2. Obtain a general floor plan for each school building. Floor plans are available in the schools' asbestos management plan.
3. Identify all fixtures to be sampled on the general floor plan. All plumbing fixtures that are used for cooking or drinking must be sampled. Bathroom and utility sinks do not need to be sampled.
4. Assign a unique alphanumeric identifier to each fixture.
5. Label fixture identifiers on the floor plan. Make sure all samples are labeled with the corresponding alphanumeric identifier for each fixture.
6. Determine which IEPA accredited laboratory you will utilize for the analysis. A list can be found at <http://www.epa.illinois.gov/citizens/citizens-information/in-your-home/resources-on-lead/index>.
7. Contact the laboratory to obtain enough 250 mL sample bottles and Chain of Custody forms to allow you to collect 2 samples from each fixture. The laboratory will also provide sample shipping instructions.





# Test Results

## How to interpret your test results

1. Test results will be reported in either parts per billion (ppb) or micrograms per liter (ug/l). Both units of measure are essentially identical.
2. If any sample exceeds 5 ppb of lead, the notification requirements are triggered.



## *Reporting and Notification Requirements*

- ❖ Within 7 business days of receipt of test results, schools must email all results to IDPH at [DPH.LeadH2O@illinois.gov](mailto:DPH.LeadH2O@illinois.gov).
- ❖ If all sample results are less than 5 ppb, schools may use their website (at minimum) to notify parents of the results.
- ❖ If any of the sample results exceed 5 ppb, schools must notify parents in writing or electronically, and include :
  - The location and source exceeding 5 ppb, and
  - The USEPA website for information about lead in drinking water: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>.

**Parents should be advised to contact their health care provider with any concerns about their child's health, including blood tests for lead exposure.**

# Next Steps

Test results will likely generate questions from parents, guardians, and the public about steps the school is taking to address lead in water.

Removing fixtures from use may not be an immediate option. Establishment of a water management plan, including identification of lead-containing plumbing, scheduled flushing, fixture replacement, and monitoring is the best course of action for schools addressing positive lead test results.

Additional guidance for interim (short-term) and permanent lead control measures is provided in the USEPA 3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools. This document can be found at:

[www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/201509/documents/toolkit\\_leadschools\\_guide\\_3ts\\_leadschools.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/201509/documents/toolkit_leadschools_guide_3ts_leadschools.pdf)



The Illinois Department of Public Health supports the efforts of Illinois Section AWWA to educate schools about lead testing. For additional information see [dph.illinois.gov](http://dph.illinois.gov).