



Lead Sampling Program for Schools and Child Care Facilities

What is the Lead Sampling Program for Schools and Child Care Facilities?

The Indiana Finance Authority (“IFA”), with assistance from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, developed the Lead Sampling Program to help schools and child care facilities assess if there is a presence of lead in drinking water within their buildings.

How can lead get into the water supply?

Lead primarily enters drinking water through corrosion of internal plumbing materials such as lead service lines, lead solder, brass fittings and fixtures, and galvanized steel pipes. Lead is not commonly found in ground or surface water. Even though the drinking water received from a Public Water System meets federal and state standards for lead, a school or child care facility may still have elevated lead levels due to plumbing materials and water use patterns. In most cases, the issue is not system-wide, but specific to the fixture identified. Sampling is the only way to determine whether lead is present. Sampling locations may include drinking water fountains, food preparation sinks, and other fixtures used to provide water for human consumption.

What is considered an elevated lead level in a child care facilities’ drinking water?

In Indiana, an elevated lead level is a reading that meets or exceeds the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s “action level” of 15 parts per billion (ppb). The action level of 15 ppb is not a measure of health effects. It serves as a signal to the school or child care facility to take steps to reduce the lead concentration in the water.

Is this a voluntary program?

Yes. This program is voluntary because current state and federal laws do not require schools or child care facilities that purchase water from a Public Water System to test for lead.

Who is eligible for the program?

All Indiana public schools and child care facilities, recognized by the Indiana Department of Education and the Family and Social Services Administration respectively, are eligible to apply for the Lead Sampling Program. A school or child care facility that is classified as a Public Water System is not included in the program because these facilities are already required to sample for the presence of lead.

What is the process?

Schools and child care facilities apply to the program using a link on the IFA website. IFA will prioritize funding assistance for eligible facilities based on: facility age, ages and financial needs of the children enrolled, and expected facility use. The IFA will also prioritize facilities that did not participate in the 2017-2018 Lead Sampling Program and facilities that apply early. Once approved, facilities will use an online database to create sample locations. Then, sample bottles will be mailed. Facility personnel will collect and mail the samples to a laboratory using pre-paid postage. The laboratory will upload sample results to the online database. The facility will log on to the database to view the results. If lead levels above 15 ppb are discovered, the facility will receive recommendations and technical support on reducing or removing lead sources. Lastly, the facility will be required to share results with parents and staff.

What does the program provide?

The Lead Sampling Program covers the cost of the online database, sampling bottles, postage to send the bottles to the facilities and to the laboratory once collected, plus the sample analysis cost. Schools and child care facilities are responsible for collecting samples and costs associated with remediation actions identified by sampling. The IFA will provide training webinars to guide participants through the process, as well as remediation guidance specific to each facility’s results.

What is the timeline for this program?

The IFA will accept applications until January 17, 2020. Applicants will be notified in February 2020. Training webinars and sample collection will begin soon after.

For more information: Visit the Lead Sampling Program website: <https://www.in.gov/ifa/2998.htm>