



DRINKING WATER SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

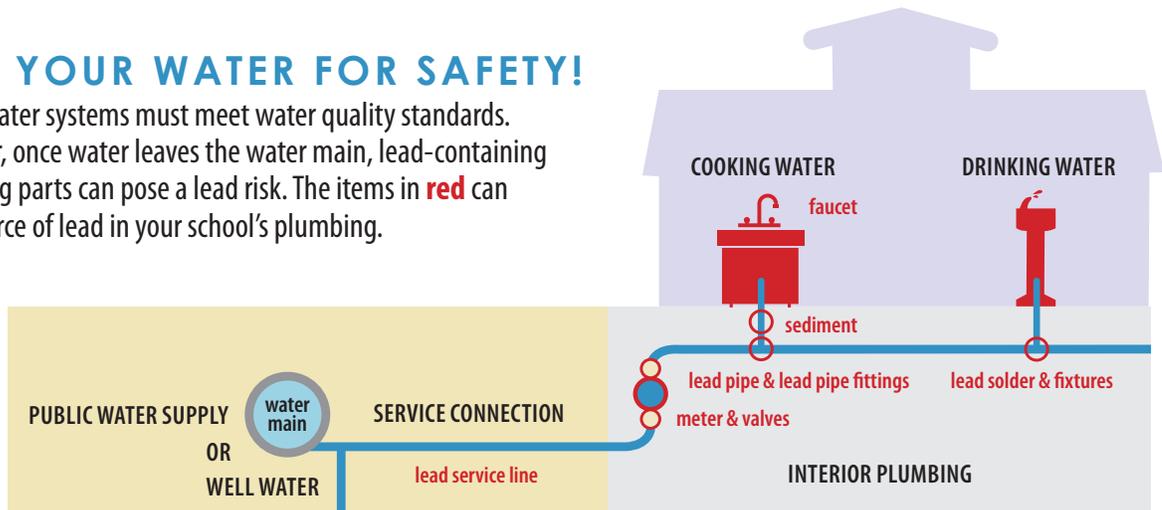
Students need effective access to appealing and safe drinking water for healthy hydration.

“Schools participating in the National School Lunch Program must make potable water available to children at no charge where meals are served during meal services.” —USDA memo #SP49-2016

Most water is safe! Schools are responsible for testing water quality in their facilities. It is important to know your school’s water quality, address any issues and share that information with families.

▶ TEST YOUR WATER FOR SAFETY!

Public water systems must meet water quality standards. However, once water leaves the water main, lead-containing plumbing parts can pose a lead risk. The items in **red** can be a source of lead in your school’s plumbing.



▶ FIND IT AND FIX IT — OR — FILTER OR FLUSH IT

If you find lead in the water, there are simple and affordable methods of addressing it. Learn more about these solutions in the “For More Information” section on the reverse side.



Find the source of the problem and **fix** it (by replacing a lead pipe, fixture, faucet, etc.)



Filter the water coming out of affected taps



Flush your plumbing system after periods of non-use



TAKE ACTION TO SHOW YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY THAT YOU CARE ABOUT DRINKING WATER QUALITY.



FOUR STEPS to School Tap Water Safety

1 DEVELOP WATER MANAGEMENT AND WATER EMERGENCY PLANS

- » Plan for regular system maintenance and also for water contamination events. For example, in the event of lead contamination:
 - Immediately stop using affected water outlets and provide bottled water as a temporary solution.
 - Attempt to find source of contamination.
 - Flush it or Filter it: implement a system flushing protocol or filter water coming out of affected taps.
 - Fix it: replace lead service lines, lead solder, interior plumbing or fittings/fixtures with lead content.

2 KNOW YOUR TAP WATER QUALITY

- » Review your water utility's latest Water Quality Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) to learn the water quality as it leaves the utility.
- » If utility water is over or close to the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for any contaminant, consult with your local health department and/or water utility about appropriate action and activate your water emergency plan, if necessary.

Does your school have its own well or act as a public water system?

Your facility is responsible for annual water testing under the U.S. Safe Drinking Water Act. Contact a certified water analysis lab to conduct a tap water test. Water must be tested for lead, copper, disinfection byproducts ("trihalomethanes" or "DBPs"), biologic contaminants (e.g., E. coli) and all key contaminants in your area (e.g., nitrate, arsenic, uranium).

3 TEST FOR LEAD

- » Even when your utility provides safe water, water should be tested at the tap for lead that can come from facility plumbing. In some states, testing for copper is also required or recommended.
- » Have a certified water analysis lab test your tap water. Many states and school districts have free testing programs for school drinking water.
- » It is critical that the tap water samples to be tested are drawn correctly. Train staff or have utility/lab technician draw the samples.
- » The lab report will tell you the lead level in your sample(s) and whether it is above the Action Level (AL). If any taps at your site test over the AL for lead, immediately activate your water emergency plan. If any taps are close to the AL for lead, talk to your local health department about next steps.

4 COMMUNICATE RESULTS

- » Tell your school community, local and state health departments, water utility, state department of education and local media of test results.
- » Share your test results whether they are good or bad.
 - Bad results? Let people know what you'll do about it.
 - Good results? Spread the good news and show families you take their children's health seriously.
- » If you've fixed contamination problems, consider posting a child friendly symbol of safe drinking water at each safe tested tap.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- "Healthy Hydration" and "Effective Access to Water in Schools" fact sheets available at www.DrinkingWaterAlliance.org/facts
- "3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities" <http://bit.ly/2g32iA4>
- "Managing Lead in Drinking Water at Schools and Early Childhood Education Facilities" <http://bit.ly/2wvUo9n>
- More National Drinking Water Alliance resources www.DrinkingWaterAlliance.org/safety-schools



Fact sheet created with funding from Kaiser Permanente. Content developed by the Nutrition Policy Institute, University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views/position of Kaiser Permanente. Graphic image source: adapted from Families Against Chemical Toxins. Icons by Pixel Buddha, Daniel Bruce and Freepik from www.flaticon.com.