

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAMPLING LEAD IN NYS SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

September 13, 2016

Purpose:

This Quick Reference Guide (QRG) outlines requirements and recommendations for developing and implementing a lead in schools sampling plan for compliance with 10 NYCRR Subpart 67-4.

Audience:

This QRG applies to all New York State public school districts and boards of cooperative educational services (collectively, “schools”), including those already classified as a public water system under 10 NYCRR Subpart 5-1. The QRG may serve as a reference for school personnel and/or consultants responsible for collecting lead in drinking water samples. The QRG may also be used as guidance by local health departments.

Identify Sampling Locations:

Before testing for and correcting lead problems, evaluate the school’s plumbing and assess the factors that may contribute to lead contamination. An evaluation should identify all outlets that are used or could be potentially used for drinking and/or cooking purposes. Based on this information, the school can develop a sampling plan, including assigning unique identification numbers to each outlet to be sampled. For more information on developing a sampling plan, see EPA’s publication entitled “3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools,” available at https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/toolkit_leadschools_guide_3ts_leadschools.pdf.

Sampling:

Below is a list of recommended steps to follow after the sampling plan has been developed.

1. Select a laboratory to perform your water analysis that is certified by the New York Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP) for lead in drinking water. The list of approved laboratories is located at <http://www.wadsworth.org/regulatory/elap/certified-labs>.
2. Contact the laboratory to obtain chain of custody forms and 250 mL sample containers.
3. All samples should be collected early in the morning before any water has been used. Water must not be used for between 8 and 18 hours prior to sampling.
4. To get a sample that best represents water used for drinking, avoid collecting samples in the mornings after vacations, weekends, or holidays unless specifically directed to do so.
5. On the morning of the sampling, perform a quick walk-through of the facility to ensure no outlets were left running overnight.
6. Make sure you have clean hands and wear non-latex or nitrile gloves to reduce risk of contaminating samples.
7. Use the Chain of Custody form.
8. Use only 250 ml sample containers supplied by the ELAP-certified laboratory.
 - a. Containers should not be opened until you are ready to collect the sample.
 - b. Sampling containers that have been compromised in any way, e.g., by being touched on the threads or the interior surfaces, must not be used.
 - c. Keep food and drink away from the sampling container.
9. Make sure no water has been drawn from the outlet before you collect the sample.
10. Begin sampling at the outlet closest to the Point of Entry (where the water enters the building from the street).
11. Place the container under the outlet that is being tested and collect 250 ml of water.
 - a. If a drinking water fountain is being sampled, angle the container's mouth in a way that it will capture the entire flow of water from the bubbler.
 - b. If a faucet is being sampled, make sure you turn on the cold water tap. For motion-sensor or metered faucets, the hot water valve needs to be turned off prior to sampling.
 - c. If you are collecting a sample from a faucet, aerators and screens should not be removed before taking samples.
12. Turn on the water and fill the container at the same rate that the outlet would be used under normal use for drinking/cooking, without allowing any water to run down the drain. Close the container according to the instructions provided by the certified laboratory selected.
13. Record the time the sample was collected.
14. Label the sample container with the same information as on the Chain of Custody form.
15. Record any observations that may impact the samples' results. For example, leaking faucets or drinking water fountains, discolored water, low water pressure, etc.
16. Prepare the container for shipping according to the certified laboratory's instructions.
17. Ship containers according to the certified laboratory's instructions.
18. Samples must be delivered to the laboratory within the timeframe provided by the laboratory.