



School and Childcare Lead Monitoring FAQs

Protecting Public Health

Louisville Water's focus on public health extends well beyond producing and delivering safe, high quality drinking water. Eliminating the risk of lead getting into drinking water is a shared responsibility between Louisville Water and you.

WHAT IS LEAD?

Lead is a toxic metal that is harmful to human health. It was used for decades in products found in and around homes, schools, and businesses. The health concerns are for people of all ages, particularly pregnant women, infants, and young children.

There is no safe blood lead level for children. Lead exposure can affect almost every organ and system in the body. Even low lead exposure in children has been linked to learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and other issues.

WHERE DOES LEAD COME FROM?

The greatest exposure to lead is from swallowing paint chips containing lead or breathing in lead paint dust. Lead can enter drinking water by leaching from aging plumbing materials and fixtures as water flows through a facility's network of pipes.

HOW DOES LEAD GET INTO DRINKING WATER?

Louisville Water meets all federal and state drinking water standards for lead. Louisville's water does not contain lead when it leaves the treatment plants. The potential for water to pick up lead particles comes from the corrosion of pipes and plumbing that contain lead.

WHY IS LEAD A CONCERN?

Lead exposure poses serious health risks particularly to children and pregnant women. There is no safe blood lead level for children. Lead exposure can affect almost every organ and system in the body. Even low lead exposure in children has been linked to learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and other issues.

SCHOOL AND CHILDCARE LEAD MONITORING PROGRAM

Why is Louisville Water Company asking us to participate in a lead monitoring program?

Louisville Water has been testing school drinking water for lead since 1989. New federal drinking water regulations require testing in schools and childcare facilities.

Schools and daycares have become a focal point for testing because children spend a lot of time in these facilities. Older buildings may have pipes and fixtures that can contain lead. It is important to maintain high quality water in your facilities. Identifying potential sources of lead and creating a remediation plan are critical first steps. In most cases, the issue is not system-wide, but specific to a particular fixture, solder, or pipe. For more information visit <https://louisvillewater.com/your-water/water-quality/lead-awareness/school-and-childcare-lead-awareness/>.

Why are schools and childcare facilities a concern?

Due to the nature of school facilities (water use patterns, age of buildings, plumbing), as well as children spending a significant amount of time within these facilities, schools and childcare facilities have become a focus point.

How do I know if lead is a problem in my school or childcare facility?

Sampling is the only way to determine whether lead is present in a facility's drinking or cooking water.

Are Kentucky schools and childcare facilities required to test for lead in drinking water?

There are currently no requirements in Kentucky for schools and childcare facilities to participate in or conduct drinking water monitoring for lead. All testing is currently voluntarily.

Who is eligible for the program?

All schools and childcare facilities in the Louisville Water service area are eligible to participate. The greatest focus however is on any facility or home that cares for children under the age of six. This includes daycares, head start programs, pre-schools, and elementary schools. Middle and high schools are not directly targeted to participate but can request monitoring.

Is this program free?

Yes. The lead monitoring program is free.

When will monitoring begin in schools and childcare facilities?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will not require public water utilities to begin monitoring in schools and childcare facilities until 2027. **Louisville Water however will begin monitoring in 2025.**

Over the next eight years Louisville Water will reach out to all elementary schools and registered childcare facilities in our service area to offer sampling. The new regulations require that we attempt to sample 20% of those facilities each year. All schools and registered childcare facilities will be sent a letter, offering testing annually.

PARTICIPATE IN THE MONITORING PROGRAM

How do you decide which facilities to test first?

Until 1950, it was common to install lead and galvanized service lines. Many plumbing fixtures also contained lead. Lead is typically more prevalent in older buildings with older plumbing. Louisville Water works with the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness to identify zip codes where buildings with lead plumbing may be more prevalent.

How can my facility sign up to participate in this monitoring program?

Check the table below for our monitoring schedule. It is based on your facility's zip code. We will reach out with program details when it is your year to sample. If you would like to participate now, or missed your originally scheduled date, please contact **502.569.3676** to schedule.

Year	Zip codes
2025	40216, 40210, 40208
2026	40203, 40215, 40214
2027	40211, 40217, 40212, 40204
2028	40258, 40261, 40272, 40218, 40206, 40041, 40213
2029	40219, 40245, 40202, 40222, 40207
2030	40229, 40118, 40205, 40223, 40220, 40243

2031	40299, 40292, 40291, 40242, 40241, 40059, 40228, 40209
2032	40177, 40026, 40014, 40109, 40165, 40056

Do we still need to participate if the facility is recently constructed, or replaced all the plumbing?

If your facility was constructed or replaced all plumbing and service lines after 2014, you should receive a waiver to participate. Some plumbing materials sold before 2014 were advertised as “lead free” but still contain 8% lead.

Do we still need to participate if we installed water filters throughout the facility?

If all outlets used for drinking and cooking have filters designed for lead reduction (NSF Standard 53), you may qualify for a waiver.

After we decide to participate what happens next?

Louisville Water will call to schedule a visit to your facility. Members of our water quality team will walk through your facility to help identify the best sample locations. Once a sample plan has been created, our laboratory will ship your sample kits.

When will a facility receive the Water Quality Lead Test Kits?

The United States Postal Service will deliver the sample kit. It may take up to a week to receive it. Each box contains a sample kit with pre-labeled plastic bottles. It will be sent to the designated facility using the address and contact name that you provided.

SAMPLING

How do you choose which water outlets to sample?

When it’s your year to monitor, Louisville Water employees will visit your facility and help identify the required sampling locations. For more information visit [/LouisvilleWater.com/Choosing-Sample-Locations](http://LouisvilleWater.com/Choosing-Sample-Locations).

How is the sampling conducted?

When you receive your sampling kit it will contain an instructional video and detailed written instructions on how to collect a sample. Samples are typically collected early in the morning before children and staff arrive. It is important that samples are collected after water has been sitting in the pipes for at least 8 hours, but no more than 18 hours.

What happens after we collect our samples?

Instructions included in your sampling kit will tell you how to contact Louisville Water when your samples are ready. They will also provide information on where to leave your samples. Samples will be picked up within 1-3 days and brought back to our certified laboratory to analyze.

MONITORING RESULTS

How long will it take to get results?

Once samples are delivered to Louisville Water’s EPA certified laboratory, they take approximately 4 weeks to analyze. If there are any elevated lead detections Louisville Water will call within 24 hours to discuss the results. Written reports are typically mailed within 30 days. This period may increase or decrease depending on our workload.

Who gets the results?

Sample results will be provided annually to all participating schools and childcare facilities, EPA, local health departments and Kentucky Division of Water. This also includes information on facilities that choose not to participate.

Are results communicated to the parents whose children attend the school or childcare facility?

School and childcare administrators decide how to communicate the results to parents. Louisville Water will provide samples of communications that can be used to effectively relay results.

Are there safe levels of lead?

There is no safe blood lead level for children. Any detection of lead in drinking water will trigger a series of recommendations for remediation or maintenance. The goal of this monitoring program is to educate facilities on potential sources of lead and how to reduce them.

What happens if monitoring shows lead present in water used for drinking or cooking?

Louisville water will provide information about remediation and possible sources of funding.

Depending on the lead level, there are several things that might be recommended:

- Flush the plumbing every day.
- Install a lead reduction filter.
- Post a sign not to use the outlet.
- Remove or replace the outlet.

If an outlet must be removed or replaced who pays for it?

The facility is responsible for all costs associated with removing or replacing plumbing, plumbing fixtures, or drinking water fountains. Typically, the work is less than \$500.

If we remove materials that contain lead, how will we know that our water is safe to use for drinking and cooking? Further testing is recommended to make sure that the remediation work was successful. Please refer to your local county health department for further assistance. The **Additional Information** section provides resources to create a remediation plan.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

No one knows more about your water supply than Louisville Water. For more information on lead, visit louisvillewater.com/your-water/water-quality/lead-awareness/ or call **502.569.3676**.

EPA 3T's – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency hosts a comprehensive website that addresses all aspects of implementing and communicating a lead program specifically for schools and childcare facilities. www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/3ts-reducing-lead-drinking-water-toolkit.

Kentucky Department for Public Health – Kentucky Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (KCLPPP) is part of the Healthy Homes Initiative and offers a comprehensive approach to primary and secondary prevention of childhood and prenatal lead poisoning and other housing-related health hazards. Every county has an office for Public Health that is responsible for developing and operating state public health programs and activities for the citizens of Kentucky.

NSF.org – NSF International provides consumer information about water filter capabilities, including claims to reduce lead. The NSF can also be reached at 800-NSF-8010.

Pure Spout Filters – innovative certified filter solutions that reduce lead in drinking water fountains <https://purespoutfilter.com>.

CDC – Lead in Drinking Water – The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has information on lead's health effects and tips for protection from water and other common sources of exposure. Visit www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead.