

Public Water Supply Testing Vs. Testing at Schools

(15 ppb vs 20 ppb)

It is important to note that the lead testing protocol used by public water systems is aimed at identifying system-wide problems rather than problems at outlets in individual buildings. Moreover, the protocols for sample size and sampling procedures are different. Under the LCR for public water systems, a lead action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) is established for 1 liter samples taken by public water systems at high-risk residences. If more than 10 percent of the samples at residences exceed 15 ppb, system-wide corrosion control treatment may be necessary. The 15 ppb action level for public water systems is therefore a trigger for treatment rather than an exposure level. • EPA recommends that schools collect 250 mL first-draw samples (i.e., samples of stagnant water before any flushing or use occurs) from water fountains and other outlets used for consumption, and that the water fountains and/or outlets be taken out of service if the lead level exceeded 20 ppb. The sample was designed to pinpoint specific fountains and outlets that require remediation (e.g. water cooler replacement). The school sampling protocol maximizes the likelihood that the highest concentrations of lead are found because the first 250 mL are analyzed for lead after overnight stagnation.

EPA. (2006). *3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools: Technical Guidance*. Retrieved from <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/3ts-reducing-lead-drinking-water-schools-and-child-care-facilities>