

Lead Sampling for K-12 Schools: Background and Fact Sheet



EBMUD is working with your school district to test for lead in high use water faucets and fixtures at your school site.

First please remember:

- **THE HIGH QUALITY EBMUD TAP WATER DELIVERED TO YOUR SCHOOL SITE MEETS AND SURPASSES ALL STATE AND FEDERAL DRINKING WATER REQUIREMENTS.**
- **ACCESS TO AND CONFIDENCE IN TAP WATER IS ESSENTIAL FOR HEALTHY HYDRATION FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES!**

Lead and copper in water frequently originates from the corrosion of plumbing materials which allows the metals to leach into tap water. Events in Flint, Michigan – where corrosion control practices were inadequate – have focused attention on lead in drinking water and potential health impacts.

The water delivered by East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) meets and surpasses all state and federal drinking water requirements, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 1991 Lead and Copper Rule.

Lead Sampling in Schools

In December 2016, EBMUD received new lead in schools testing requirements from the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water as part of California's municipal drinking water system permits. Under this new permit requirement, EBMUD provides consultation and testing at public and private kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) school sites when testing is requested by the school district to ensure the health of children and staff. The state drinking water permit requires testing be offered when requested prior to November 1, 2019.



EBMUD has always maintained efforts to minimize lead in tap water:

- » **EBMUD REMOVED ALL KNOWN LEAD SERVICE LINES (THE PIPE FROM THE WATER MAIN TO A WATER METER) FROM THE DISTRICT'S SERVICE AREA IN THE 1990s** and, if any lead materials are found, we remove them.
- » **WE HAVE SOUND CORROSION CONTROL PRACTICES IN PLACE, WHICH MINIMIZES CORROSION POTENTIAL IN BOTH OUR DISTRIBUTION PIPES AND PRIVATE PROPERTY PLUMBING.** If any lead pipes exist in homes or private properties, our corrosion control practices minimizes lead from leaching into the water. Corrosion control has been part of our operation since our water system was built in the 1920's, before the Lead and Copper Rule came into being. We do extensive testing of our water supply to ensure that EBMUD water is minimally corrosive.

- » **EBMUD OFFERS FREE LEAD TESTING FOR OUR CUSTOMERS.** Although we removed all known lead service lines from our system years ago, customers may want to test the plumbing in their homes or businesses. At no cost, customers can request a voucher for a certified lab to test the water from their taps. Contact EBMUD at 1-866-403-2683 or via email at custsvc@ebmud.com.

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School Site Testing Details

Each school site requires a site-specific sampling plan to identify 5 high-use taps or 'fixtures' for testing. Once these taps are identified, EBMUD (or their contractor) must collect our test samples following at least 6 hours of **NON-USE**, in the morning **PRIOR TO STAFF AND STUDENTS ARRIVING, PRIOR TO ANY USE OF THE FIXTURES**. It is critical that the tap water samples are drawn correctly.

Test Results and Retesting

The high-use tap water samples will be analyzed for lead levels by a certified contract laboratory. Under the State's drinking water permit requirement, EBMUD will test these samples and provide results to the school district facilities contact within 10 days or within 2 days if the result is above the state action level (15 micrograms per liter). Under our drinking water permit, EBMUD is not allowed to release these results publicly; we must provide them to the school district only for the first 60 days. If test results show lead levels above the action level, EBMUD will return and retest the high-use fixtures as requested by the school district facilities contact.

Solutions for taps above the State action level

The School or School District determines the response: options include additional sampling, removing the lead source (fixture or plumbing), replacing the fixture, or other plumbing repairs.

Lead Poisoning from Other Common Sources

The most common sources of lead in the home are paint, dust and soil. Children under six years of age are the most at

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risk. They often play close to the floor and put things in their mouths. If lead is swallowed, a young child's body tends to absorb lead into the blood more

readily than an adult's body. Children who have diets that are low in iron and calcium tend to absorb more lead, so good nutrition is one important factor to prevent lead poisoning. Older homes, built before 1978, with peeling paint, pose the most risk for young children.

- Lead poisoning can interfere with critical stages in a young child's development. Children under six years old should be tested.
- Ask your doctor or health care provider to test your child.
- Alameda County Healthy Homes Department – Lead Poisoning Prevention Program: 510-567-8280 <http://achhd.org/>
- Contra Costa Public Health Lead Poisoning Prevention: <http://cchealth.org/lead-poison/>



*Lead was used in house paint until 1978, and the older the home, the more lead in the paint.
(Source: Contra Costa Health Services)*

Tips if you have older plumbing at your home or private property

If your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing out the lines by running your faucet for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking (capture and reuse this water for other uses such as watering ornamental plants), and avoiding consuming water from the hot water tap, where lead is more likely to be present.

EBMUD has a proud history of providing high-quality drinking water for 1.4 million customers in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. The District's award-winning wastewater treatment protects San Francisco Bay and serves 685,000 customers.

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