

The Department of Children and Families Child Care Licensing Regulations include a potable (drinking) water testing requirement for licensed and registered child cares. The Health Department is providing this fact sheet to better inform child care providers about testing private and public drinking water for lead.

Child Cares with Private Drinking Water

The homeowner or child care provider is responsible for testing private drinking water.

The Health Department recommends the following testing schedule to ensure that your drinking water is safe:

- Total coliform bacterial test every year
- Inorganic chemical test every five years
- Gross alpha radiation screen every five years

Sources of Private Drinking Water

- Drilled wells and dug wells
- Lakes and rivers
- Springs

Lead

Lead is a toxic metal, especially for child under 6 years and pregnant women. In young children, lead can hurt the brain, kidneys and nervous system. Young children's bodies are developing, which makes them more sensitive to lead. Children also absorb lead more easily than adults. Lead in a child's body can slow down growth, make it hard to learn, and cause behavior problems. A fetus can also be harmed by a woman's exposure to lead before and during pregnancy.

The Department of Children and Families requires a first draw lead test because lead can be found in public and private water systems. Lead can get into drinking water from lead or galvanized iron pipes and fittings, lead solder, and brass or chrome fixtures. When water sits in pipes, for example overnight, lead can be dissolved into water. Also, hot water dissolves lead more easily than cold water. This means that only cold flushed water should be used for

preparing infant food or formula or for cooking.

The action level for lead in water is 0.015 mg/L.

Child Cares with Public Drinking Water

If you, your landlord or your housing association pay a water bill, your water comes from a public water supply. Public water supplies are systems that serve 25 people or more. Under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, public water supplies are tested regularly for bacteria, inorganic chemicals, naturally occurring radioactivity, and other chemical compounds. To obtain test results or a Consumer Confidence Report for your public water supply, call the number on your water bill or (800) 823-6500. You can also search for your results here:

<https://anrweb.vt.gov/DEC/dwgwp/>

Even though the public water system tests for lead, it is still important to test your drinking water for lead to ensure your pipes, fittings and fixtures are not leaching lead into your water.

If your water has an unusual smell, taste, color or sheen -

Switch to another safe water source until test results are known. Call the Health Department at (800) 439-8550 or (802) 863-7220.

For more information

For water testing or treatment questions, call the Health Department:
(800) 439-8550 or (802) 863-7220

For licensing and regulation questions, call the Department of Children and Families:
(800) 649-2642 option 3