

These Frequently Asked Questions supplement the step-by-step instructions and videos found online at: [healthvermont.gov/leadtest-childcares](http://healthvermont.gov/leadtest-childcares).

You can click on a question to go to the answer. All answers follow below.

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## Basics of the Law

### 1. Who is required to test?

All school districts, supervisory unions, independent schools, and licensed or registered child care providers in Vermont.

### 2. What are the requirements of the law?

The law requires schools and child care providers to test drinking water in their buildings for lead. If there is a test result at or above the action level of 4 ppb, schools and child care providers are to stop using that tap immediately, then develop and implement a remediation plan to lower the levels of lead to below 4 ppb.

Child care providers are also required to notify parents, guardians and staff before testing begins, after results are received, and after remediation actions have been completed.

See [letter templates for notification](#).

### 3. My program already tested for lead in drinking water. Do I need to do more testing?

Yes. If you already have tested for lead in drinking water under the 2016 child care or Department of Environmental Conservation regulations, you are still required to test all taps for drinking, cooking, food prep, making bottles and brushing teeth. Both a first draw and flush sample need to be taken at each tap under the requirements of this law.

If you have tested your water under the requirements of the new law, contact your CDD licensing technician for next steps.

### 4. When is a child care provider required to test?

Beginning in June 2019, child care providers will be sent sample bottles in the mail with instructions on how to collect water samples, how to fill out the form, how to return samples to the Lab, as well as a pre-paid UPS return shipping label. The [schedule is posted online](#).

### 5. I am applying for a child care license and I get my water from a private water source (drilled well, dug well, spring). What should I test my water for and when will I get my kits?

You are required to test your water for lead, bacteria (total coliform and *E. coli*) and inorganic chemicals.

A CDD licensing technician will call you when you're in phase 2 of your license application process to collect information for your lead in drinking water testing.

Your lead in drinking water test kits will be mailed to the mailing address you provided. When you return your lead in drinking water samples to the Health Department Laboratory, the bacteria and inorganic chemical test kits will be mailed to you.

Instructions on how to collect water samples and information about how to return your samples to the Health Department Laboratory will be included in the box with the test kits.

### **6. What happens if we do not test?**

Child care providers are required to by law to test their drinking water for lead. The testing status of all schools and child care providers will be available to the public on the State's [Results Website](#). The law states that schools and child care providers who do not comply may be fined up to \$500.00 following a hearing.

### **7. What is the action level, and what does it mean?**

The action level set by the legislature is 4 ppb. If the level of lead in drinking water is at or above 4 ppb, then child care providers are required to fix the problem to lower lead levels below 4 ppb.

Any tap with a result at or above 4 ppb cannot be used for drinking, cooking, food prep, making bottles and brushing teeth until a fix has been implemented and follow-up testing shows the lead levels at the tap are below 4 ppb. Alternatively, the fixture can be permanently removed.

Please note that there is no safe level of exposure to lead. The Health Department recommends that lead levels in water be as close to zero as possible. However, there is no remediation funding for fixing taps that are below 4 ppb.

### **8. Do we need to pay for anything?**

Sample bottles, shipping and testing are free for child care providers.

Reimbursement is available to remediate any taps with levels at or above 4 ppb. Child care providers will be reimbursed for the actual cost of replacing a drinking water fixture up to a maximum amount. Receipts or invoices will need to be submitted to the Health Department. The maximum amount for each type of fixture is:

1. Public drinking fountains: \$1,800.00
2. Taps used for cooking: \$650.00

3. All other taps in child care facilities: \$400.00

### Collecting Water Samples

#### 1. Who is responsible for collecting samples?

Child care providers are responsible for collecting samples. You should review the available guidance materials to make sure you are comfortable with how to collect water samples.

See [guidance materials and a video on how to collect water samples](#).

#### 2. My program is located in a school. Who is responsible for collecting samples and notifying the community?

Schools will collect drinking water samples from all taps that are currently or reasonably expected to be used for drinking or cooking in the buildings they own, control and operate. To simplify the testing process, **the Health Department recommends that schools collect water samples for licensed child care programs** that operate in their school.

**However, it is the responsibility of the child care to be sure the law's requirements for their facilities are met.** This includes ensuring that taps within the child care area are tested, and that any taps found to have levels at or above 4 ppb are addressed.

The child care provider is also responsible for notifying their program's parents, guardians and staff at least 5 days before water sample collection begins, and within 10 business days of receiving results from the Lab.

Child care providers should talk to school administrators (principals and facilities managers) to be fully aware of the school's plans and schedule for:

- collecting the water samples
- notifying parents, guardians and staff after receiving results
- implementing any required remediation plans

Child care providers may also ask to review the school's tap inventory to ensure that taps in the child care areas are clearly identified in the location description.

### 3. How many samples need to be taken?

The number of samples depends on the number of taps that are used for drinking, cooking, food prep, making bottles and brushing teeth. Two samples at each tap, a first draw and a flush, need to be taken.

One exception is for combo fixtures, which are fixtures that have multiple taps (for example, a sink with a faucet and a drinking fountain, or bottle fill station and drinking fountain), will have two first draw samples, but only one flush sample. The flush sample should be from the tap that is easiest to flush for 30 seconds.

### 4. Which taps do not need to collect samples from?

Contact the CDD licensor on duty at 800-649-2642, option 3 or [ahs.dcfddchildcarelicensing@vermont.gov](mailto:ahs.dcfddchildcarelicensing@vermont.gov).

### 5. What does a “first draw” sample mean? What does a “flush” sample mean?

First draw sample – collects the first water that comes out of the tap after a period of inactivity (between 8 and 18 hours). The first draw sample tests the water that is in the fixture. The first drop of water out of the faucet must end up in the sample bottle.

Flush sample – collects water after the tap has been running for 30 seconds. The flush sample tests the water that is in the pipes.

### 6. What is the difference between a tap and a fixture?

A tap is where the water comes out and from where you collect a water sample.

A fixture is the actual plumbing component—for example a faucet or fountain—that includes the associated pipes and valves.

### 7. I have a sink with a faucet *and* drinking fountain (or a water fountain with a bottle fill station), what do I do?

Fixtures that have multiple taps (such as a sink with a faucet and a drinking fountain, or bottle fill station and drinking fountain) are called “combo fixtures.” You will need to do two first draw samples, but only one flush sample for combo fixtures. The flush sample should be from the tap that is easiest to flush for 30 seconds.

See [photo examples of different fixture types](#).

### 8. How do we order test kits?

If you are a child care provider who operates year-round, a CDD licensing technician called you sometime mid-June through August to collect information on how many taps you have. If you don't fit in this category, a CDD licensing technician will be contacting you at a later date. The CDD licensing technician will complete a survey for you that will order the number of sample bottles you will need.

### 9. What are the testing procedures? How do we collect water samples?

Collecting water samples is simple and does not require in-depth knowledge or training. Collect two samples at each tap identified on your tap inventory – a “first draw” and a “flush.” The samples will be collected in 250 mL (milliliter) bottles.

A Water Sample Collection Information Form needs to be filled out for each sample that is collected, for example, there will be two forms filled out for one tap, one for the first draw sample and one for the flush sample. For combo fixtures, which are fixtures that have multiple taps (for example, a sink with a faucet and a drinking fountain or bottle fill station and drinking fountain), there will be two first draw samples, but only one flush sample. The flush sample should be from the tap that is easiest to flush for 30 seconds.

See [how to fill out the form](#) and a [video on how to collect water samples](#).

If you're collecting water from a bathroom tap, make sure the toilet in that bathroom isn't flushed for at least 8 hours before you collect the sample. It is recommended that you use a different bathroom, if possible.

### 10. Do I need to collect a sample from an ice machine?

No.

### 11. When do we need to sample?

Collect samples first thing in the morning after the water has been sitting in the pipes for 8 to 18 hours. Make sure you collect all of the samples before the water starts being used for the day.

### 12. In what order do I take the samples?

Take all first draw samples first, then go back and collect all flush samples.

See [video on how to collect water samples](#).



**13. How much time will it take to collect samples?**

It takes only a couple of minutes to collect one water sample. The amount of time to collect all the samples depends on the number of taps that you are collecting samples from.

It will take a few minutes to fill out the Water Sample Collection Information Form for each sample. **Filling out all the forms before you begin collecting samples is advised.**

See [how to fill out the form](#).

**14. What if I already ordered sample bottles but forgot to include a tap?**

If you already ordered your sample bottles and forgot to include a tap that needs to be sampled under the law, please contact your CDD licensing technician.

**Returning Samples to the Lab****1. How do we get samples to the Lab?**

Five days after notifying parents, guardians and staff (by following [instructions under Step #2](#) of the Water Sample Collection section), you can collect water samples. Water samples must reach the Lab within one week of collection.

On the same day the samples are collected, you can call UPS to schedule a pickup at their site or drop off the box(es) at a UPS Store (find a UPS Store near you). The pickup or drop-off needs to happen Monday through Thursday (not on a Friday, a weekend, or a holiday).

If you are scheduling a pickup, call UPS at 1-800-742-5877. Say “schedule a pickup” and then “agent” to get a live representative. Provide the tracking number and the date and time for the driver to do the pickup.

Place the return shipping label on the box, covering the original shipping label. Make sure to get a receipt or write down the tracking number for your records.

See the [video on returning your water samples](#).

**2. What do I need to include in the box being sent back to the Lab?**

1. Sample bottles with the correct Water Sample Collection Information Form securely wrapped around each bottle.
2. A copy of your completed tap inventory.

### 3. I didn't receive a return UPS label in the box of sample bottles.

Call the Vermont Department of Health Laboratory at 802-338-4724 or 800-660-9997 (in Vermont), and a label will be sent to you.

## Test Results and Remediation

### 1. How long will it take to get results?

You will receive your results by email 2 to 6 weeks after you mail back the sample bottles.

If you are applying for a new license, expect to receive your lead in water results within 2 to 3 weeks.

### 2. How are the results being communicated and where will the results be made available?

Results will be sent to the child care provider who is listed under "Report to be Sent to" on the Water Sample Collection Information Form. Child care providers (including those that operate in a school) are responsible for notifying parents, guardians and staff of the results within 10 business days of receiving them.

See [letter templates to use for notification](#).

Templates are [translated into nine languages](#).

The results will be posted on the [Results Website](#). Results for licensed child care programs that operate in a school will be listed under the school's name.

### 3. What happens if results are at or above the 4 ppb?

If lead levels are found to be at or above 4 ppb, child care providers must immediately stop using the tap for drinking, cooking, food prep, making bottles and brushing teeth. You can use the bottled water from your emergency response plan's shelter-in-place supply or may use bottled water that has been purchased.

After the problem has been addressed, and the fixture has been flushed for a few minutes twice a day for 3 weeks, child care providers must do another test to make sure the water is safe before using the tap again.

Refer to the [Remediation Guidance](#).

For further assistance, talk to a state remediation expert to determine your next steps. Contact DEC staff: Ben Montross at 802-498-8981 or [ben.montross@vermont.gov](mailto:ben.montross@vermont.gov) or Catie Bartone at 802-272-0411 or [catharine.bartone@vermont.gov](mailto:catharine.bartone@vermont.gov).

#### 4. What does it mean if the *first draw* result is at or above 4 ppb, but the *flush* is not?

The likely source of lead is the fixture (for example, the faucet).

Refer to the [Remediation Guidance](#).

For further assistance, talk to a state remediation expert to determine your next steps. Contact DEC staff: Ben Montross at 802-498-8981 or [ben.montross@vermont.gov](mailto:ben.montross@vermont.gov) or Catie Bartone at 802-272-0411 or [catharine.bartone@vermont.gov](mailto:catharine.bartone@vermont.gov).

#### 5. What does it mean if the *flush* result is at or above 4 ppb, but the *first draw* is not?

The likely source of lead is the plumbing.

Refer to the [Remediation Guidance](#).

For further assistance, talk to a state remediation expert to determine your next steps. Contact DEC staff: Ben Montross at 802-498-8981 or [ben.montross@vermont.gov](mailto:ben.montross@vermont.gov) or Catie Bartone at 802-272-0411 or [catharine.bartone@vermont.gov](mailto:catharine.bartone@vermont.gov).

#### 6. What does it mean if the *first draw* *and* the *flush* results are at or above 4 ppb?

The probable source of lead is the plumbing, or the plumbing **and** the fixture, but not the fixture alone.

Refer to the [Remediation Guidance](#).

For further assistance, talk to a state remediation expert to determine your next steps. Contact DEC staff: Ben Montross at 802-498-8981 or [ben.montross@vermont.gov](mailto:ben.montross@vermont.gov) or Catie Bartone at 802-272-0411 or [catharine.bartone@vermont.gov](mailto:catharine.bartone@vermont.gov).

#### 7. What happens if lead is found in the water, but the levels are below 4 ppb?

No remediation action is required. Child care providers must still notify parents, guardians and staff of the results.

Please note that there is no safe level of exposure to lead. The Health Department recommends that lead levels in water be as close to zero as possible. However, there is no remediation funding for fixing taps that are below 4 ppb.

You may choose to remediate taps BELOW 4 ppb, however this is not required by law and there is no remediation funding for taps below 4 ppb. If you choose to complete this voluntary remediation, ask your CDD licensing technician to enter the information for you online. It will appear on the Results Website. Any fixture replacements will still require follow-up testing to make sure lead levels are below 4 ppb. Follow-up testing costs will be covered by the State.

### **8. Who pays for the remediation?**

Child care providers will be reimbursed for the actual cost of replacing a drinking water fixture up to a maximum amount.

Receipts or invoices will need to be submitted to the Health Department for reimbursement.

The maximum amount for each type of fixture is:

1. Public drinking fountains: \$1,800.00
2. Taps used for cooking: \$650.00
3. All other taps in child care facilities: \$400.00

### **9. Is any follow-up testing needed?**

After the problem has been fixed and the fixture has been flushed for a few minutes twice a day for 3 weeks, child care providers need to do another test to make sure the water is below 4 ppb. See the next section, “Follow-up Testing,” for more details.

### **10. What if I decide to remove a fixture instead of replacing it?**

When reviewing your possible remediation actions, you may choose “permanent fixture removal.” If you choose this, you must physically remove the faucet or fountain and cap the supply pipes. Sink basins can stay in place so there aren’t holes in the countertop.

### Follow-up Testing

#### 1. The taps have been remediated. What are the next steps?

1. If the permanent remediation action you did was anything other than permanently removing the fixture, call your CDD licensing technician to order follow-up test kits for the taps that were at or above 4 ppb.
2. Before collecting water samples – For at least **3 weeks**, turn on the remediated taps to run water through the new fixtures or plumbing for a **few minutes twice a day**.
3. Collect water samples by following the instructions included in the box, which are the same for the initial water samples you took. On the Water Sample Collection Information Form, check the “Post remediation follow-up” for Sample Type and **write the initial first draw Lab ID# for the initial sample on the line**. (You can find the initial first draw Lab ID # by looking up your results on the [Results Website](#) and clicking on “Tap Summary Cards”).
4. Return samples to the Lab by UPS. (*See Q4 for more details.*)
5. Test results will be emailed to you within 2 to 6 weeks.
  - a. If a result is below 4 ppb, no further action is required.
  - b. If a result is at or above 4 ppb, then refer back to the [Remediation Guidance](#). Consult with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for help in determining the next best remediation action. Contact Ben Montross at 802-498-8981 or [ben.montross@vermont.gov](mailto:ben.montross@vermont.gov) or Catie Bartone at 802-272-0411 or [catharine.bartone@vermont.gov](mailto:catharine.bartone@vermont.gov).

See the [Follow-Up Testing section](#) for more details on each of these steps.

#### 2. How do we order test kits for follow-up testing?

Call your CDD licensing technician to order follow-up test kits. The kits and shipping costs to and from the Lab are covered by the State. Sample bottles will be mailed to you within 2 to 3 weeks.

#### 3. When can we take follow-up water samples?

After installing new fixtures and plumbing, it is important to flush them before taking follow-up water samples. This will remove any residual lead that may be left over. **For at least 3 weeks, turn the tap on for a few minutes twice a day**. Wait until after the water gets and stays cold, which tells you the water is coming from the water main.

#### 4. How do we get follow-up samples back to the lab?

Send follow-up sample bottles back to the Lab using UPS, which was the same method for the initial samples. These are the steps:

- On the same day you collect your water samples, call UPS to schedule a pickup at your site or drop off the box(es) at a UPS Store. Water samples must reach the Lab within one week of collection.
- Schedule a pickup or drop off the box(es) at a UPS Store Monday through Thursday (not on a Friday, a weekend, or a holiday).
- Seal the box with packing tape and place the return shipping label on the box, covering the original shipping label.
- If you are scheduling a pickup: Call UPS at 1-800-742-5877.
  - When calling UPS, say “schedule a pickup” to get a live representative.
  - Provide your tracking number and the date and the time you want the driver to do the pickup.
  - There is no cost for shipping. If you are asked to pay, say “bill to original shipper.”

#### 5. When will we receive follow-up sample results?

Results will be emailed to you within 2 to 6 weeks after you mail back the sample bottles. One week after receiving the results, they will be posted on the [Results Website](#).

#### 6. Do we need to send notification when we receive our follow-up results?

No, you can direct parents, guardians and staff to view results on the [Results Website](#).

### Cost Reimbursement

#### 1. Do I have to pay for remediation?

Child care providers need to pay for all costs associated with remediation actions upfront. However, reimbursement is available for costs to remediate any taps with lead levels at or above 4 ppb. The maximum amount for each type of fixture is:

1. Public drinking fountains: \$1,800.00
2. Taps used for cooking: \$650.00
3. All other taps in child care facilities: \$400.00

#### 2. What is the reimbursement amount?

Child care providers will be reimbursed for the actual cost of replacing a drinking water fixture, up to a maximum amount. Receipts or invoices will need to be submitted to the Health Department. The maximum amount for each type of fixture is:

1. Public drinking fountains: \$1,800.00
2. Taps used for cooking: \$650.00
3. All other taps in child care facilities: \$400.00

### **3. Does the reimbursement cover parts and labor?**

Child care providers will be reimbursed for parts and labor up to the allowable amount per fixture if a reimbursement request with the required documentation.

### **4. Does fixture replacement include some plumbing?**

Plumbing replacement that is associated with the installation of a new fixture is reimbursable, although it will count towards the maximum reimbursable amount. For example, the cost to replace a tap used for cooking is \$400 and the plumbing replacement associated with the installation is \$350, the child care provider would be reimbursed \$650.

### **5. Are filters on the tap reimbursable, and if so, for how much?**

Yes, if DEC confirms that filters are the best remediation option, then child care providers may be reimbursed for the cost of the first filter. However, the costs associated with ongoing filter maintenance and replacement costs are the child care provider's responsibility.

### **6. Can child care providers or property management staff who do the work themselves be reimbursed?**

Yes, labor can be reimbursed if the child care providers or property management staff do the work themselves. Labor must be included in the itemized costs by fixture in the request submitted for reimbursement.

### **7. What do I need to do to be reimbursed?**

Use the [online Reimbursement Request](#) to submit your request.

Before you begin, please make sure you can:

- Send a copy of all receipts and invoices electronically (combining them into a single file is recommended, if possible). You will be asked to attach them when prompted.
- Enter total replacement costs by fixture (including parts and labor).
- Identify each tap you are requesting reimbursement for by its initial first draw Lab ID#. You can find the initial first draw Lab ID# by looking up your results on the [Results Website](#) and clicking on "Tap Summary Cards."

NOTE: The online form is easier to complete on a computer than on a mobile device.

If you are unable to complete the request using the online form, you may use the [Reimbursement Request document](#) to submit your request instead. Mail this document with accompanying receipts and invoices to:

Vermont Department of Health  
Attn: Business Office  
PO Box 70  
Burlington, VT 05402

### **8. What information will be asked for in the online reimbursement request?**

You will be asked to:

- Send a copy of all receipts and invoices electronically (combining them into a single file is recommended, if possible). You will be asked to attach them when prompted.
- Enter total replacement costs by fixture (including parts and labor).
- Identify each tap you are requesting reimbursement for by its initial first draw Lab ID#. You can find the initial first draw Lab ID# by looking up your results on the [Results Website](#) and clicking on "Tap Summary Cards."

### **9. What if I can't complete the online reimbursement request?**

If you can't complete the online request, you may use the [Reimbursement Request document](#) to submit your request instead. Mail the completed document, with all receipts and invoices to:

Vermont Department of Health  
Attn: Business Office  
PO Box 70  
Burlington, VT 05402

### **10. Should receipts and invoices be submitted all at once?**

The Health Department recommends that child care providers submit one reimbursement request when possible, with receipts included as backup documentation.



### **11. Can receipts and invoices be submitted more than once?**

The Health Department recommends that child care providers submit one request for all remediation reimbursement, when possible.

### **12. When can I expect to receive my reimbursement?**

Payment will be received within 30 days after the Health Department receives an error-free invoice. If there is an error found on your invoice, the Health Department will reach out to request a new invoice. The Health Department will use your State of Vermont Vendor ID to issue payment, which will be made in your preferred method of payment. If you are unsure if you already have a State of Vermont Vendor ID, please email [AHS.VDHAccountsPayable@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHAccountsPayable@vermont.gov).

## **General Questions About Lead and Lead Poisoning**

### **1. What is lead?**

Lead is a highly toxic metal that has been commonly used in many household, industrial and automobile products—such as paint, solder, batteries, brass, car radiators, bullets, pottery, etc. Exposure to lead is a public health concern in Vermont.

### **2. How does lead make you sick?**

Lead is a toxic metal that is harmful to human health. Lead can harm anyone, but children under the age of six are at special risk. Children are most susceptible to the effects of lead because their bodies are still developing, and they absorb lead more easily than adults do. Lead can affect children’s development in many ways, but it can cause particular harm to the central nervous system (brain).

There is no safe level of lead in the body. Even low blood lead levels in a child’s body can slow growth, make it hard to learn, and cause behavior problems. Most children who have lead poisoning or high levels of lead exposure do not look or act sick.

### **3. What are common sources for lead exposure?**

Sources include dust from deteriorated lead-based paint, toys, keys, jewelry, pottery, dishes, contaminated soil, old plumbing pipes and fixtures in homes, imported candy and foods, and antique, vintage and salvaged goods.

While a major source of lead poisoning in Vermont children is paint, lead in plumbing pipes and fixtures can add to a child's overall lead exposure.

Learn more about [lead hazards and lead poisoning](#).

#### 4. How does lead get into drinking water?

Lead can get into drinking water as the water moves through plumbing components that contain lead, such as brass fixtures or solder with a high lead content. There have been several advances to remove lead from plumbing components over the years but depending on the age of the plumbing materials, there may be varying levels of lead content. In addition, water that sits in lead plumbing and fixtures for longer periods of time will contain higher levels of lead.

Learn more about [lead in a home's drinking water](#).

#### 5. Should a child be tested for lead if there were results at or above 4 ppb in a child care provider's drinking water?

Probably not. Any time a child's test shows an elevated blood lead level (at or above 5 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ), the Health Department tries to identify the source of the exposure. By testing all child care facilities and requiring remediation, we will be certain that any exposure from drinking water at a child care facility has been identified and reduced.

When deciding whether to test a child for lead in response to a child care provider's water test results, it is important to understand that the possible exposure to lead from drinking the water at child care may only be a part of the picture.

We can't know how much water an individual child drank at child care, so the amount of exposure is unknown. There may also be additional considerations that would prompt a blood lead test, including:

- exposure to lead in a house or apartment building built before 1978 (dust from lead paint is a leading source of exposure) or an adult who has occupational exposure to lead
- previously identified behavioral or academic problems
- parental concern and desire to know if the child has been exposed

All children should be screened for lead at age 1 and again at age 2 by their health care providers. Talk to your child's health care provider if you have questions about your child's lead exposure.

Learn more about [lead hazards and lead poisoning](#).

### 6. Should families or staff test their home's water for lead?

Since you can't see, taste or smell lead in water, testing is the only sure way to know whether there are harmful levels of lead in your drinking water.

If you're on a private source of water (e.g. well or spring), a lead test is included in the standard homeowner's water test kits from the Health Department Lab.

Learn more about [testing your well water for lead and other contaminants](#).

If you're on a public water supply (for example, town water), you can check with your town or water supplier for the Consumer Confidence Report (or find it online), which will tell you the level of lead found in your water system. However, lead can get into your drinking water from contact with lead in plumbing and fixtures in your home, so the Health Department recommends that people on public water—especially if they live in an older home (pre-1986)—test their kitchen tap or any other tap used for consumption (for example, drinking, cooking, food prep, making bottles and brushing teeth) for lead.

To test your own home for lead in drinking water, call the Health Department Laboratory to order a \$12 first draw lead test kit at 802-338-4736 or 800-660-9997.

Learn more about [lead in a home's drinking water](#).

### 7. Should I stop drinking my home's water if high levels of lead are found?

If the level of lead is above 0.001 mg/L (1 ppb), the Health Department recommends taking action to lower lead levels in your water. Consider installing a treatment system to remove lead, replacing pipes or plumbing fixtures and fittings, drinking and preparing food with bottled water, or getting water from a known safe source.

See [information on treatment systems](#).

Child care providers are required to take the tap out of service, which means to stop using it, if levels are found at or above 4 ppb until a fix is made and follow-up testing shows that water from that tap is below 4 ppb.

### 8. Do water filters remove lead?

Not all water filters will remove lead. The filter must meet NSF/ANSI Standard 53 or 58. Filters must be replaced according to manufacturer instructions to ensure the filter continues to remove lead. Recommendations are listed in the product's owner manual or on the product's packaging.

**9. If there are high levels of lead in my drinking water at home, is it safe for pets to drink?**

In general, if the water is not recommended for humans to drink, then it's best not to give it to pets.

Lead is toxic to small animals (dogs and cats), but the exposure usually comes from home renovations that create lead paint dust that pets lick off of surfaces, not from water.