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State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Drinking Water

SECOND REVISION

CALIFORNIA WATER SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE LEAD TESTING FOR SCHOOLS

This announcement is being distributed to all Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP)-accredited laboratories. In an effort to further safeguard California’s drinking water quality, the State Water Resources Control Board is requiring public water systems in California that serve schools to conduct lead sampling at school sites if they request it. This new initiative was announced on January 17, 2017.

There are approximately 9,000 K-12 schools in California, most of which are served by more than 3,000 community water systems in the state. While these community water systems extensively and regularly test their drinking water for lead, lead could get into clean water at a school campus if there were corroded pipes or old fixtures at the school.

Division of Drinking Water School Lead Sampling Permit Amendment

On January 17, 2017, the Division of Drinking Water (Division) issued an amended permit to all community water systems currently serving a school. Pursuant to the amended permit, water systems in California are required to test the schools in their service area for lead if sampling is requested by the school’s officials. The water system will be required to collect up to 5 samples at each school requesting assistance. To view the sampling plan and protocols, visit the Division’s [Lead Sampling of Drinking Water in California Schools website](#).

What Laboratories Need to Know if Asked to Analyze for Lead

Any laboratory analyzing for lead using test methods EPA 200.8, EPA 200.9, and/or SM 3113B, must be ELAP-accredited and be able to achieve a Practical Quantitation Level of 5 ug/l (ppb). A list of ELAP-accredited laboratories for each method is attached to this announcement and posted to the ELAP website: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/elap>. If laboratories are not currently certified to analyze for lead by ELAP and would like to participate in the lead sampling efforts, they must apply for certification by submitting an application. Visit the Application Instructions page on the ELAP website for information.

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If a water system receives a laboratory result greater than 15 ppb, they then have two business days to report those results back to the school. This has been incorrectly interpreted to mean that the laboratory has two days to complete the analysis after receiving the sample from the water system. This expedited response requirement is for the water systems, not for laboratories. Analysis of lead samples for schools under this permit amendment may be conducted as a regular sample.

In addition, in some cases a public water system will request that they receive the laboratory result no more than 10 business days after the date of sample collection. This is for repeat samples, not for the initial sample collected at a location.

How Laboratories Will Upload Data

Laboratories analyzing for lead in schools will upload the results to the Division's Water Quality Information Replacement (WQIR) database using existing data submittal methods [the Write-On system or Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS)] using new Primary Station (PS) codes. The samples must be labeled using the following sample ID format:

<water system No.>-<school ID>-<sample ID> (i.e. 1710001-005-1)

It is important that the sample ID format be recognized as a school lead sample and not a water system's routine compliance sample labeled using a PS Code format (i.e <water system No.>-<Facility ID>).

Contact Information

For additional information, contact the School Lead Sampling Specialist at DDW-PLU@waterboards.ca.gov or by phone (916) 449-5577.