



Media Release

\$5 million Allocated for lead testing in California Child Care Centers

Assistance prioritized for Child Care Centers caring for infants

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SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board has executed an agreement to provide approximately \$5 million in grant funds for testing and remediation of lead in drinking water at licensed Child Care Centers.

The passage of Assembly Bill 2370 in 2018 requires that all licensed child care centers constructed before January 1, 2010 test their drinking water for lead and do so within a three-year window. Subsequent testing every five years after the date of the first test is also required. The testing requirement does not apply when services are provided in the home of the caregiver.

Lead is a naturally occurring toxic metal used in many products and found throughout the environment including air, soil and water. Children are particularly susceptible to lead exposure. Lead can slow down growth and development, harm a child's nervous system and impact brain development. Studies have found that even small amounts of lead exposure can make it difficult for children to learn, pay attention and succeed in school. Children under six years old are most at risk, particularly infants.

The California Department of Social Services regulates licensed child care centers and plans to issue directives to centers in early 2020 regarding the requirements for testing and remediation. Once issued, that information will be posted on the [CDSS Provider Information Notices page](#).

A second 2018 bill, Senate Bill 862, appropriates \$5 million from the General Fund to the SWRCB and prioritizes centers serving infants and preschoolers. The bill gave highest priority for centers that serve infants, those that operate only one center and those with a majority of children receiving subsidized care. The Office of Water Programs at California State University, Sacramento will utilize the grant funds to implement a statewide program to assist priority centers, with support from the California Rural Water Association and the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network.



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