

Lead in California school water:

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Lead is a neurotoxin that can limit brain development and put children at increased risk for behavioral problems. You can't see, taste or smell lead in water.



Here are six things parents need to know about lead testing in California schools:

-  **Schools across California are testing their water for lead** under [a new state law](#) that gives them until July 1, 2019, to comply. Some schools are exempt, such as private schools, schools built since 2010 and schools that already test their water.
-  **You can find the results of California school lead testing online.** Go to EdSource.org/lead to look at a map or to type in your school's name to get lead test results for the last two years. For monthly updates go to the [State Water Resources Control Board](#). For [information](#) on school water testing call (916)322-9602 or email DDW-PLU@waterboards.ca.gov
-  **No amount of lead in drinking water is safe.** California's law only requires schools to shut down or repair water outlets where tests show lead levels over 15 parts per billion. But the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) warns that limit is too high, and says lead can still be harmful at lower levels. Schools are not required to take any action to address lead – or inform parents of test results – if tests show lead concentrations at or under 15 parts per billion.
-  **California's lead testing law does not require extensive testing at schools.** Schools are only required to test one to five water sources to comply with the new law, regardless of how many outlets they have. Lead levels often vary widely from one water fixture to another, so schools could miss contaminated sources if they don't undertake more extensive testing.
-  **Other sources cause lead poisoning more frequently than water.** Lead poisoning is most often the result of exposure to lead-bearing paint chips or lead dust in soil. But health experts say [lead exposure is cumulative](#), so lead in drinking water can worsen the effects of exposure from other sources. Young children [are at greatest risk](#) from lead exposure.
-  **A blood test is the only way to find out if your child has suffered lead poisoning.** The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) warns, "Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick." For more information, contact your [county health department](#).



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