



A Service of The City of Cincinnati

GREATER CINCINNATI  
WATER WORKS



# FAQs Concerning Lead Testing for Child Care Providers

## What has prompted a review of lead in water?

Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) has always had a program to address lead in the drinking water. However, recent crises involving elevated levels of lead in drinking water in Flint, MI, and Sebring, OH along with other US cities have reached prominence on a national level. These events have resulted in federal and state regulators reacting to quickly review current regulations concerning lead in drinking water.

## What has Greater Cincinnati Water Works been doing regarding the issue of lead?

GCWW provides treatment specifically to minimize the amount of lead that may leach into the drinking water. This treatment process, called corrosion control, minimizes the chance that lead can be picked up from home and building plumbing. GCWW has also recently joined with the Cincinnati Health Department and Hamilton County Public Health to expand its lead outreach to focus more on lead in schools and child care providers.

## Why is there a focus on child care facilities?

Facilities such as schools, child care centers and family child care homes where children are routinely cared for should be reviewed for the potential presence of lead since young children are at a higher risk of adverse health consequences from lead exposure.

## How might a child care facility's children and staff be exposed to lead?

There are several sources of lead exposure in the environment, one of which may include drinking water, depending on the plumbing materials used at the child care facility. There is no lead in drinking water when it leaves the water treatment plant, and GCWW's water distribution mains do not contain lead. However, water service branches (the water pipe that provides water from the water main in the street to a building) may be made of lead, and/or plumbing materials and fixtures inside a building may contain some lead.

## Where can I find out more information about sampling for lead in child care facilities?

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has developed a comprehensive document addressing lead in drinking water in schools, called the **3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools: Revised Technical Guidance Document** (3Ts Document). GCWW highly recommends child care providers follow the same practices outlined in this document to understand the water quality within their facilities. A link to the 3Ts program can be found on our website, [Lead.myGCWW.org](http://Lead.myGCWW.org).

## Does GCWW provide sampling assistance?

GCWW will assist child care providers with creating a sampling plan and will analyze samples free of charge. Child care staff should expect to spend some time completing a sampling plan as well as collecting samples. Sampling for lead is simple and can easily be accomplished by child care staff with minimal training.

## Where should I sample?

Each drinking and cooking outlet within the child care facility should be sampled. This would include drinking fountains, sinks in restrooms and classrooms, as well as sinks in the kitchen area that are used for food preparation. The 3Ts document explains in detail where sampling should be done.

## When should I take a sample?

You should sample first thing in the morning when the child care program is active, before using water for the day. Sampling right after weekends and vacation periods (when buildings are vacant, and no water is being used) does not provide an adequate representation of the water quality within child care programs. The 3Ts Document provides additional details on when to test drinking water outlets to obtain a representative sample for lead analysis.





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### Where can I get sampling bottles?

GCWW will provide free sample bottles/kits for you. These kits will either be mailed to you, or you can arrange to pick them up.

### How long will it take to get the sample results?

It normally takes GCWW 2 to 3 weeks to analyze samples and provide the results. However, this timeframe may increase or decrease depending on the volume of the workload at any given time.

### What happens if the sample results indicate detections of lead?

GCWW will call or meet to discuss the results at no charge. If necessary, free follow-up sampling can be arranged. GCWW can also discuss short and long-term remediation options with you.

### Will I get my results in writing?

Yes, GCWW will provide your results in writing.

### What should I tell the families and parents at the child care facility about the sampling?

Performing sampling and eliminating sources of lead are very positive steps that show your program is being proactive in protecting the health of children. The 3Ts Document provides additional information about how to communicate with families.

### What will GCWW do with the sample results?

GCWW will share the results with the Cincinnati Health Department, Hamilton County Public Health, or other health departments where applicable.

### Partner with us!

#### As a partner, you can expect the following from GCWW:

- An explanation of our records of service lines providing water to the child care program;
- Verification of the actual service lines;
- A link or a copy of the recommended USEPA 3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools: Revised Technical Guidance Document (3Ts Document);
- Delivery of sample kits to the facility;
- Analysis of the samples;
- Detailed discussion of the results;
- Consideration of follow-up samples, if needed;
- Assistance with a remediation plan;
- Assistance with creating a communications plan for the child care community.

#### To be an effective partner, GCWW will need the following from the child care program:

- A thorough sampling plan, that clearly identifies all drinking and cooking water outlets;
- Collection of samples following the sampling protocol outlined in the 3Ts Document;
- Review of the sample results with GCWW;
- Communication regarding sampling results to the child care community;
- Development and implementation of remediation plans, if necessary.

#### For more information on lead in drinking water:

Go to GCWW's lead website - [Lead.myGCWW.org](http://Lead.myGCWW.org)



[www.myGCWW.org](http://www.myGCWW.org)



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