

Interpreting Your Lead Results

Key Terms

Term	Definition
Outlet ID	A unique identifier assigned to each drinking water outlet (e.g., drinking fountain, classroom sink, or kitchen faucet) where samples are collected.
Outlet Location	The specific location of the drinking water outlet, such as the floor and room number.
Initial First Draw Result (ppb)	An initial first draw sample is collected immediately after turning on the water, following 8–18 hours of non-use. Results are reported in parts per billion (ppb), which measure the concentration of lead in the water.
Follow Up Flush Result (ppb)	A follow-up 30-second flush sample is collected only if the initial first draw result is 15 ppb or higher. During a separate sampling event, the outlet is left unused for 8–18 hours before sampling, and water is run for 30 seconds prior to collection. Results are reported in parts per billion (ppb) and help determine whether lead is coming from the fixture or the building's plumbing.
Post-Remediation First Draw Result (ppb)	A first draw sample is collected after corrective actions (e.g., fixture replacement, filter installation, or plumbing repairs) to confirm whether lead levels have been reduced. The sample is collected immediately after turning on the fixture following 8–18 hours of non-use. Results are reported in parts per billion (ppb).
Post-Remediation Flush Result (ppb)	A 30-second post-remediation flush sample is collected immediately after the post-remediation first draw sample during the same sampling event. After the outlet is left unused for 8–18 hours, the first draw sample is collected, the water is then run for 30 seconds, and the flush sample is collected. Results are reported in parts per billion (ppb).
Program Action Level (15 ppb)	The level set by the State of Tennessee. If results are at or above this level, corrective actions are highly recommended (e.g., fixture replacement, installation of a certified filter, or other remediation).
Non-Detect (ND)	Indicates that no lead was detected above the laboratory's reporting limit.
No Further Action	Indicates that the lead concentration in the sample is less than 1 ppb, meaning no lead was detected at or above 1 ppb.
Action Suggested	Corrective action may also be taken for outlets with results below 15 ppb, as there is no known safe level of lead exposure for children.
Take Action	At minimum, if a test result is 15 ppb or higher, the outlet should not be used for drinking or cooking until the source of lead is corrected.

Result Notes	Additional details or comments related to sample collection, the drinking water outlet, or any remediation measures taken.
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Understanding Your Results

Lead in drinking water test results provide a **snapshot in time**. Lead levels can vary depending on factors such as:

- How long water sits in pipes before use
- Changes in plumbing or building use
- Water chemistry and temperature
- Whether fixtures or plumbing materials contain lead

These results apply only to the outlet tested, not the entire building, at the specific day and time it was tested. Additional testing of outlets may be necessary to fully understand the sources of lead.

If results are 15 ppb or higher, the outlet should be immediately removed from service and not used for drinking or cooking until corrective actions are completed and additional testing confirms that lead levels have been reduced.

If results are below 15 ppb, no immediate action is required; however, it may still be beneficial to regularly flush fixtures or consider replacement during renovations, as there is no known safe level of lead for children.

The Tennessee Lead Testing in Schools and Child Care Centers Program can assist with interpreting results, planning remediation, and confirming that corrective actions are effective.

Lead Testing Data Disclaimer

The data displayed reflect the results of water samples collected from public schools and licensed child care centers across the State of Tennessee. All laboratory analysis is performed in accordance with EPA Method 200.8 for lead in drinking water. The results represent lead concentrations in the specific water samples collected at a particular point in time. Lead in drinking water originates from lead-containing plumbing materials. It is important to note that lead levels can fluctuate due to various factors including changes in water usage, stagnation time, plumbing modifications, and variations in the water supply. Sample sites are selected based on observations of water fixtures used by students and staff for drinking or food preparation. However, they do not include every water outlet or scenario in the facility (e.g., non-potable locations or fixtures used exclusively for cleaning).

The Tennessee Lead Testing in Schools and Child Care Centers program is an ongoing effort to reduce lead in drinking water through testing, mitigation, and routine maintenance.