

Draft sampling protocol

Per US EPA guidance, all samples for lead in drinking water must be collected after a period of at least 8 hours, but no more than 18 hours, of stagnant water conditions (i.e., no water use during this period) within the interior plumbing. To meet this requirement, it is important that samples be collected during periods when schools are being actively used (i.e., not during summer or holiday vacations), but not during the day when students and staff are using the fixtures. Samples should be collected early Tuesday through Friday mornings. Samples should not be collected on Mondays or the day after longer periods of inactivity (three-day weekends for example).

For consistency among schools, the following standard procedures should be followed in all schools.

1. Identify the 2 to 3 [exact number of samples to be determined pending lab contracts] most commonly used drinking water outlets (water fountain, cooler or faucet used for food production or filling water bottles) in consultation with school staff. If possible, sample regularly used outlets from each floor or wing.
2. The fixture should be assigned an identification number, such as Water fountain next to room 002.
3. The location of each outlet should be documented on an existing school floor plan, if available, or in field notes.
4. Generally Tuesday through Friday, not after a weekend or holiday. Samples should be collected in the morning prior to the arrival of students and most staff in the building (6:00 am is recommended). Samples are collected in laboratory-supplied, 250 mL containers which are not opened until the time of sample collection.
5. Complete bottle labels with the fixture identification number (from above), date and time of collection just prior to sampling.
6. Collect samples according to the sampling protocol (briefly described here): The open sample bottle is placed under the fixture (faucet, water fountain, water cooler, etc.) and the fixture is turned on. The sample bottle is filled to the top, with the water turned off before it overflows. The cap is tightly closed and the bottle placed in a cooler or plastic bin.
7. Complete and review all sample labels, data sheets and chain of custody forms to ensure that sample information is correct, including school name, fixture identification, time and date of sampling, and name of the person collecting the sample.
8. Store the properly labeled samples in a cooler or plastic bin with the documents in the main office of the school, or other designated site, until pick-up by laboratory courier or project staff for transportation to the laboratory.

Following analysis at a state-certified lab, results will be sent to URI project staff.

1. Individual results will be sent to each school using results template letters being created under the communication strategy (including sample values, what those values indicate and what next steps the school should take in response).
2. Data entered into a project database for further assessment and,
3. Inclusion in the report to the General Assembly.