

MANDATORY LEAD IN WATER TESTING

TRAINING MODULE 4: ELEVATED LEAD LEVELS



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Action Level

The new action level is 15 parts per billion (ppb). **Any fixture testing at 15 ppb or higher must be addressed immediately.**

Immediate Action

Any fixture testing at 15 ppb or higher must be immediately removed from service. **In no instance shall this be more than 48 hours.** This can be accomplished by shutting off the water to the fixture, and/or bagging the fixture. The fixture cannot be returned to service until it has been remediated and retested, showing the lead level to be below 15 ppb.

Possible Exception to Rule

If the fixture is used primarily for sanitation purposes only, access may continue for up to 30 days, provided that clear signage is posted indicating the tap is not to be used for drinking or food preparation. **If remediation cannot be completed within 30 days, the fixture must be removed from service unless an alternate schedule is approved by ODE.**

Additional Testing

When an initial 'Draw' sample tests at 15 ppb or higher, a follow-up 'Flush' sample should be taken to help determine the source of the elevated lead level. Flush samples follow all the same criteria for a Draw sample, except instead of collecting the water immediately on opening the tap, let the tap run for 30 seconds before collecting the sample. If the results from the Flush test drop below 15 ppb, it potentially indicates that the cause is the fixture itself. If the results are the same or similar to the Draw sample results, it potentially indicates the cause to be something in the piping.

It is not necessary to take Flush samples unless the Draw test indicates high levels of lead, and Flush samples are to be used as a diagnostic tool only. **A Flush sample below the action level, following a Draw sample above the action level is NOT an indication that lead levels are acceptable.** Remediation must still take place and the fixture cannot be returned to service until remediation has been completed and the fixture has passed a follow-up Draw test.

Remediation

Remediation can be accomplished by replacement of the plumbing components that are the cause of the problem. In most instances, elevated levels of lead can be corrected by replacing the fixture and the shut off valves beneath the fixture, which can usually be accomplished with minimal expense.

Alternatively, it is possible to remediate through the installation of lead filters, however keep in mind that filters need regular maintenance and replacement, as well as regular monitoring to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the filter.

Permanent removal of a fixture is also an acceptable form of remediation, but generally should be considered only as a last resort, unless a fixture is truly not used and is not likely to be useful at some point in the future.

Instituting a regular flushing schedule is no longer considered an acceptable form of remediation.

Return to Service

Only after a fixture has been properly remediated and follow-up Draw testing shows the lead level to be below 15 ppb can a fixture be returned to service.