

RCW 28A.210.410 Lead contamination at drinking water outlets.

(1) This section applies to schools with buildings built, or with all plumbing replaced, before 2016.

(2) With respect to sampling and testing for lead contamination at drinking water outlets, a school shall either:

(a) Cooperate with the department so that the department can conduct sampling and testing as required under RCW 43.70.830; or

(b) Contract for sampling and testing that meets the requirements of RCW 43.70.830 and submit the test results to the department according to a procedure and deadlines determined by the department.

(3) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a school shall communicate annually with students' families and staff about lead contamination in drinking water. The school shall consult with the department or a local health agency on the contents of the communication, which must include: The health effects of lead exposure; the website address of the most recent lead test results; and information about the school's plan for remedial action to reduce lead contamination in drinking water. Schools are encouraged to provide the communication as early in the school year as possible.

(b) The annual communication described under (a) of this subsection is not required if initial testing, or once postremediation testing, does not detect an elevated lead level at any drinking water outlet.

(4) As soon as practicable after receiving a lead test result that reveals a lead concentration that exceeds 15 parts per billion at a drinking water outlet, and until a lead contamination mitigation measure, such as use of a filter, is implemented, the school must shut off the water to the outlet.

(5) (a) For a lead test result that reveals an elevated lead level, as defined in subsection (7) of this section, at one or more drinking water outlets, the school's governing body shall adopt a school action plan in compliance with the requirements of this subsection.

(b) The school action plan must:

(i) Be developed in consultation with the department or a local health agency regarding the technical guidance, and with the office of the superintendent of public instruction regarding funding for remediation activities;

(ii) Describe mitigation measures implemented since the lead test result was received;

(iii) Include a schedule of remediation activities, including use of filters, that adhere to the technical guidance. The schedule may be based on the availability of state or federal funding for remediation activities; and

(iv) Include postremediation retesting to confirm that remediation activities have reduced lead concentrations at drinking water outlets to below the elevated lead level.

(c) The school action plan may include sampling and testing of the drinking water entering the school when the results of testing for lead contamination at drinking water outlets within the school indicate that the infrastructure of the public water system is a documented significant contributor to the elevated lead levels.

(d) The school must provide the public with notice and opportunity to comment on the school action plan before it is adopted.

(e) If testing reveals that a significant contributor to lead contamination in school drinking water is the infrastructure operated by a public water system that is not a school water system, the

school: (i) Is not financially responsible for remediating elevated lead levels in drinking water that passes through that infrastructure; (ii) must communicate with the public water system regarding its documented significant contribution to lead contamination in school drinking water and request from the public water system a plan for reducing the lead contamination; and (iii) may defer its remediation activities under (b) of this subsection until after the elevated lead level in the public water system's infrastructure is remediated and postremediation retesting does not detect an elevated lead level in the drinking water that passes through that infrastructure.

(f) The school action plan adoption deadlines are as follows:

(i) For lead test results received between July 1, 2014, and July 25, 2021, for which a school did not take remedial action or for which postremediation retesting has not confirmed that the elevated lead level has been reduced to five or fewer parts per billion, the school shall provide notice of elevated lead levels in the communication required under subsection (3) of this section and the school's governing body shall adopt an action plan by March 31, 2022; and

(ii) For lead test results received after July 25, 2021, the school's governing body shall adopt an action plan within six months of receipt.

(g) A school's governing body may adopt an update to an existing school action plan, rather than adopting a new school action plan, in order to address additional lead test results that reveal elevated lead levels at drinking water outlets, coordinate remediation activities at multiple buildings, or adjust the schedule of remediation activities.

(6) A school must post on a public website the most recent results of testing for lead contamination at drinking water outlets, no later than the time that the proposed school action plan is made publicly available, under subsection (5)(d) of this section.

(7) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Department" means the department of health.

(b) "Drinking water" means any water that students have access to where it is reasonably foreseeable that the water may be used for drinking, cooking, or food preparation.

(c) "Drinking water outlet" or "outlet" means any end point for delivery of drinking water, for example a tap, faucet, or fountain.

(d) "Elevated lead level" means a lead concentration in drinking water that exceeds five parts per billion, unless a lower concentration is specified by the state board of health in rule in accordance with RCW 43.20.265.

(e) "Public water system" has the same meaning as in RCW 70A.120.020.

(f) "School" means a school district and the common schools, as defined in RCW 28A.150.020, within the district; a charter school established under chapter 28A.710 RCW; or the state school for the blind or the state school for the deaf established under RCW 72.40.010.

(g) "Technical guidance" means the technical guidance for reducing lead in drinking water at schools issued by the United States environmental protection agency until the department complies with RCW 43.70.840 when the term means the technical guidance developed by the department. [2021 c 154 s 2.]

Findings—Intent—Short title—2021 c 154: See notes following RCW 43.70.830.