

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** School Districts and Chief School Administrators  
**FROM:** Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health  
**DATE:** February 24, 2017  
**SUBJECT:** Requesting a school water testing waiver

The Illinois Plumbing Licensing Law ([225 ILCS 320/35.5](#)) requires schools to test for lead in water used for drinking or cooking. This includes all potable water taps, faucets, and drinking fountains, as well as handwashing sinks in classrooms occupied by Pre-K and kindergarten children or students.

If a school tested its potable water sources before January 17, 2017, the school can request a waiver from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). A waiver may be granted if the school meets all the sampling and testing requirements in Section 35.5 c(5):

- (A) the school district or chief school administrator, or the designee of the school district or chief school administrator, collected at least one 250 milliliter or greater sample of water from each source of potable water that had been standing in the plumbing pipes for at least 6 hours and that was collected without flushing the source of potable water before collection;*
- (B) an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency-accredited laboratory analyzed the samples;*
- (C) test results were obtained prior to the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 99th General Assembly, but after January 1, 2013; and*
- (D) test results were submitted to the Department within 120 days of the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 99th General Assembly.*

School districts and chief school administrators may request a waiver by emailing the sample test results to [dph.leadh2o@illinois.gov](mailto:dph.leadh2o@illinois.gov). If the school tested some, but not all of the required potable water sources, the school must test all un-sampled water sources and send the results to IDPH when it requests a waiver. IDPH may request additional information, including but not limited to:

- Plumbing profile (if available)
- Floor plan or map showing the location of lead pipes, fixtures, or other known sources of lead in water
- Sampling plan and procedures (for samples taken prior to January 17, 2017)

IDPH will deny waivers if schools:

- Fail to sample all required water sources
- Do not have the samples tested by an IEPA-certified laboratory
- Do not chose a laboratory that is able to detect levels of lead at less than 5 parts per billion

If IDPH denies the waiver, the school must resample all potable water sources included in the waiver request.

IDPH will consider other circumstances on a case-by-case basis.