

Approved by K-12 Board Action #21-36, June 3, 2021; Revised Action #23-11, February 15, 2023; Revised Action #26-13, February 18, 2026

Local school authorities are expected to test for lead content in drinking water in their school facility to ensure it meets provincial requirements established by the Ministry of Health, such as the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality* for lead. According to the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*, the maximum acceptable level for lead in drinking water is 0.005 mg/L.

In the event test results indicate elevated lead levels that are outside established guidelines, reasonable and prompt steps will be taken by the school authorities to resolve the issue.

While this policy specifically addresses lead content in drinking water, school authorities are expected to work with appropriate health authorities to address other issues that affect the quality of water as prescribed under applicable provincial and federal legislation. The same response steps will be taken to address these issues as with elevated lead levels.

The school will consult with the appropriate Health Authority to develop a water quality lead testing program for drinking water in their facility. Testing for lead content in drinking water will happen minimally once every 3 years. As a best practice, annual testing is recommended. All test results must be submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

#### **Mitigation Strategies**

If sample results reveal lead levels exceed concentration of 0.005 mg/L, the local school authority, in consultation with the appropriate Regional Health Authority, will undertake mitigation strategies which may include:

1. Flushing regimes
2. Deactivation of water sources and supplemental signage
3. Installation of filtration systems
4. Plumbing upgrades
5. Or other steps that result in reducing the exposure to lead to acceptable levels.

#### **Communication and Reporting Requirements**

In the event that testing finds drinking water concentrations of lead at or above the maximum acceptable level, the Independent School Authority must:

- a. Immediately inform the Independent Schools Branch of the issue. Ongoing compliance with this policy will be confirmed during monitoring visits and external evaluations.
- b. Work collaboratively with the appropriate Health Authority to communicate the results of testing lead content in drinking water to parents, students and staff by describing the following:
  - rationale for testing lead in drinking water,
  - identify partnership with the Health Authority to work toward a solution,
  - state results of sampling,
  - identify mitigation strategies implemented or being consider by the authority, and
  - provide contact information for the authority and the Regional Health Authority for parents, students and staff to request further information.

Ongoing monitoring visits and external evaluations will confirm compliance with this policy.