



Navy Region Northwest Lead in Priority Areas



TOP 10 FAQ'S FOR WEBSITE AND DISSEMINATION TO PARENTS

Question: Why are you testing for lead in the drinking water?

Answer: Navy policy issued in 2014 requires testing in all priority areas at Navy installations throughout the world in the best interests of the children, parents, and staff we serve. Navy leadership has adopted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines for sampling and testing for lead in schools and child-care facilities as policy. This proactive approach to the identification and elimination of potential sources of lead in facilities that cater to children shows our commitment to the safety and well-being of our Navy families.

All naval installations in the Northwest Region are in compliance with the EPA's Lead and Copper Rule.

Question: If testing and monitoring the quality of drinking water is not specifically mandated by state or local law, why should a Navy child care center devote resources to do so?

Answer: The Navy is committed to the safety and health our personnel and their family members. We are committed to ensuring our drinking water meets both the Navy's and Environmental Protection Agency's standards; and we will provide the best possible level of care that our service members and their families deserve.

Question: What is a "high priority area?"

Answer: These are facilities where there are children present. Priority areas are identified as a primary and secondary schools, Child Development Centers (CDCs), 24/7 Child Development Group Homes (CDGHs), recreation centers, Youth Centers (YCs), and community centers operated by the Navy.

Question: Are my children at risk? Where can I have my child tested for lead exposure?

Answer: No health problems have been reported to us by any staff members or parents of children using one of our facilities. Current Navy public health guidance recommends that that center staff, or those who have children at our CDCs or YCs, should contact their health care provider if they have concerns about their health.

Question: Have any health problems been reported?

Answer: No health problems have been reported to us by any staff members or parents of children using one of our facilities.



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Question: What is the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended acceptable level of lead?

Answer: EPA's recommended acceptable level is 15 parts per billion (ppb) or less. To put that into perspective, one part per billion it is equivalent to one drop of water in an Olympic sized swimming pool.

Question: What preventative measures are being taken at those locations until you can test them?

Answer: Employees are trained on precautionary procedures that are taken at our child care facilities. This includes measures such as:

- Use only cold water for food and beverage preparation. Hot water will dissolve lead more quickly than cold water and is likely to contain increased lead levels. If hot water is needed, it should be taken from the cold water tap and heated on a stove or in a microwave oven.
- Running the water before drinking and/or staff could run the water before children arrive, so they are drinking water that has not been in contact with the faucet interior since faucets are often a source of lead in drinking water.
- All formula at our childcare centers is pre-mixed and does not use water from the facility.

Question: Why are we just now being informed of this testing program?

Answer: This proactive testing at Navy installations in the Northwest Region is taking place in Spring of 2022. We worked to educate all CDC and YC staff, and to notify all parents of children who use the Navy child care facilities of this testing. We will inform all parents and staff members of the results as soon as they are available.

Question: Who is conducting the water sampling test?

Answer: The Navy's Environmental technicians or trained contractor personnel collect the samples. The water is tested by an independent, certified laboratory and takes approximately 3-4 weeks before results are returned.

Question: What is the Navy going to do if the test results are positive for the presence of lead?

Answer: If, for some reason, the test results are positive for lead, the Navy will immediately secure those particular water fixtures to minimize exposure to that water source. The Navy would also begin taking immediate action to conduct additional testing to identify the problem and take corrective actions to fix the problem. There are also routine short-term and long-term control measures that the Navy will take to help mitigate the problem until it can be permanently fixed. Parents with children at that particular facility will be notified of the results and the corrective actions being taken to fix the problem and minimize exposure to that water source.