

Lead in Drinking Water Sampling Notice
For: Sierra Middle School

In 2018, following the events of Flint, Michigan, Douglas County School District (DCSD), in partnership with the multiple agencies who provide water across the county, proactively launched a massive effort in to test water fixtures in all schools and staff support sites.

Many buildings in DCSD are relatively new, with most schools built after 1990. This is important because a [1986 federal law](#) limits the use of lead in plumbing. Some older Colorado homes, schools, and other buildings could still have old pipes or fixtures containing lead.

During this initial testing, DCSD focused the primarily on sites built prior to 1990, sampling all potential drinking water fixtures (drinking fountains, kitchen sinks, and classroom sinks) at pre-1990 elementary, middle, and high schools.

Additionally, the district tested ten percent of fixtures in all sites built post-1990 and had strict procedures in place to test more if those fixtures exceeded the action threshold.

The Federal action threshold was and still is 15 parts per billion (ppm) which our program was modeled after. A good way to visualize 15 parts per billion is to think of one single drop of paint in a 13,000-gallon swimming pool.

In 2018, a total of 1,565 samples were tested at DCSD schools and staff support sites. The overwhelming majority of samples (96.4%) came back below the 15 ppb threshold following the first test and required no further action. The remaining fixtures were removed or replaced and tested again to ensure acceptable levels were present.

In June 2022, Governor Polis signed into law Colorado House Bill 22-1358: Clean Water in Schools and Child Care Centers. This bill requires all licensed childcare programs and eligible schools to test their drinking water for lead and take action when results are found above an action level of 5 parts per billion (ppb). This is 10 parts stricter (less) than the current federal standard of 15 ppb. The goal of this law is to lower children's exposure to lead. To meet these requirements, Douglas County School District has tested all drinking water fixtures for lead where children and staff get water for drinking and cooking.

Lead is a toxic heavy metal that is [especially harmful to young children](#). The degree of risk depends on the child's total exposure to lead from all sources in the environment – air, soil, dust, food, paint, consumer products, and water. Old or corroded lead plumbing or old brass fixtures can contribute to increased lead levels in drinking water. If you are concerned about your child's exposure you can have their blood tested. Please contact your health provider to learn more about blood lead testing, or for more information please visit: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/lead-testing>.

Schools that have lead results in drinking water above 5 parts per billion (ppb) must take action to reduce exposure to lead. When lead is found at or above 5 ppb, the fixture is shut off while a more long-term solution is underway. Long-term solutions may include permanently removing the fixture from service, replacing drinking water faucets and fountains, or installing filters.

Results Summary for Sierra Middle School:

17 Fixtures were tested

17 Fixtures had lead results that tested below 5 ppb: no further action is required

Specific sampling results are available for review at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/environment/lead-safety/test-and-fix-water-for-kids>. Results may take up to 30 days to be posted on this webpage. If you have questions or concerns about our facility and the actions we are taking, please see the information below and if your questions still aren't answered, contact your school's administration.

For more information on DCSD's Lead in Water Program: [Lead in Water Sampling Results](#)

For more information on lead: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/lead>

For Colorado lead testing requirements in drinking water: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/environment/lead-safety/test-and-fix-water-for-kids>

En espanol: <https://espanol.epa.gov/espanol/informacion-basica-sobre-el-plomo-en-el-agua-potable>

For U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) general information on lead: www.epa.gov/lead