



# Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • [www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)

## Lead Testing in Drinking Water at S.C. Schools and Child Care Centers

### **What is the purpose of this grant?**

Authorized under the federal Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act, the “Lead Testing in School and Child Care Program Drinking Water Grant” creates a voluntary program for DHEC to work with schools and child care facilities to sample for lead and improve drinking water quality for children in South Carolina.

Many schools and child care facilities are served drinking water by a public water system. While these public water systems are required to be compliant with regulatory drinking water standards, many school and child care facilities have not had the water from their faucets sampled specifically for lead that can enter drinking water if a facility’s plumbing system has lead-containing components or pipes. This grant allows DHEC to test water from a school’s or child care provider’s faucets for lead.

Sampling will be conducted using established sampling protocols and an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certified lab. Sample results will be made available online and all fees associated with sampling will be covered by the grant. More information is available at <http://www.scdhec.gov/WIINGrant>.

### **Why sample drinking water at schools and child care facilities?**

The goal of this program is to test drinking water for lead and to use the results to reduce children’s exposure to lead while at school or a state-licensed or approved child care facility. According to EPA, children six years old and younger are the most susceptible to the effects of lead. Even at very low levels of exposure, health effects can include lower IQ levels, reduced attention span, hyperactivity, poor classroom performance, and other physical and behavioral effects.

### **Program description**

The (EPA) awarded DHEC approximately \$519,000 in grant funding to develop a program to reduce the exposure of children to lead in drinking water at schools and child care facilities. Utilizing the EPA’s ‘3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water’ guidance, the grant will:

- Prioritize funding towards schools and child care programs where children are most vulnerable;
- Provide education about lead and the importance of testing in schools and child care facilities;
- Foster sustainable partnerships at the state and local levels to allow for the more efficient use of existing resources and exchange of information among experts in various educational and health sectors; and
- Enhance community, parent, and teacher cooperation and trust.

### **Program Partners**

Implementation Partners include school and child care facility staff and personnel as well as SC Department of Education, SC Department of Social Services, Clemson University, SC Rural Water Association, regional and municipal water utilities, and local health departments.

### **Resources**

The resources below provide more information:

- [EPA WIIN 2107 Factsheet - Lead Testing in Schools and Child Care Facilities](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency’s 3 T’s Revised Manual](#)