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Lead Testing in Licensed Childcare Facilities and Registered Family Day Care Homes Reimbursement Program

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) currently implements the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lead and Copper Rule which regulates water systems for lead. However, the Lead and Copper Rule's primary focus is individual residences; it does not require testing in schools or daycares. Therefore, DENR and Department of Social Services (DSS) have partnered together to offer voluntary drinking water testing for lead in licensed childcare facilities and registered family day care homes at no cost to the child-care provider! Should the result indicate a problem, the licensed childcare facilities or registered provider will receive technical assistance on how to fix the problem and reimbursement for costs incurred.

Why should we be concerned about lead?
Our bodies can absorb lead in our bones, blood, and tissues where it can be stored as a source of long-term exposure. We either inhale lead, or swallow it in the water and food we ingest. Children have a soft 'blood-brain barrier,' which means exposure to lead can cause damage to the brain and nervous system, slow growth and development, and cause hearing and speech problems. Lead can also travel through the placental barrier in pregnant women, which presents significant dangers to growing infants. Adults with lead poisoning may experience high blood pressure, joint and muscle pain, difficulties with memory, and other symptoms. Other sources for lead exposure include paint, soil, dust and some consumer products.

How does lead enter drinking water in a childcare environment?
Lead typically enters drinking water through premise plumbing materials (inside a facility/home) or a service line (a pipe that delivers water from the street water main to a facility/home). More common sources of lead within facilities will likely be fixtures (faucets, water coolers, etc.), copper lines with lead solder, and a variety of in-line leaded brass components such as shut-off valves. Unfortunately, sources of lead likely exist within new and old buildings alike as the "lead-free" standard for plumbing materials allowed up to 8% lead until 2014. Water chemistry can make lead in premise plumbing systems more or less likely to leach into water. Sampling drinking water is the best way to identify lead risk in the plumbing system.

Who is eligible for the program?
Any childcare facility licensed by the State of South Dakota

What does Program Include?
DENR and DSS have partnered with a software and consulting company called 120Water to assist participants in conducting sampling, receiving, and sharing results with the community and selecting the most efficient solutions. The program provides all the materials and support needed to conduct baseline sampling of the entire plumbing system, and reimbursement costs for any expenses inquired to lower lead levels in the drinking water.

Each participating childcare facility will receive:

1. Software access to design sample plans, collect samples, track remediation, and communicate results

2. Training on sample planning and collection
3. Sample bottles and lab analysis
4. Communication templates and public transparency dashboard access to share test results
5. Technical support if remediation is needed
6. Email/phone support for all questions related to software use, sampling, and remediation
7. Reimbursement for any expenses incurred by the childcare facility to lower the lead levels in the drinking water

How many samples do I collect from my facility?
Two (2) samples will be collected from each tap used for drinking water at the facility: an initial first draw sample and a 30 sec flush sample.

What is the level of lead in drinking water that results in a problem?
15 parts per billion (15µg/L or 0.015mg/L)

What happens if the drinking water tests above 15 parts per billion?
The facility will automatically be sent a pitcher filter kit and 1-year's supply of replacement filters. This is considered a short-term solution to immediately address the lead issues discovered by sampling. Additionally, remediation specialists will be in contact to determine the best long-term solution for the lead issue and facility. Once the long-term solution has been implemented in the facility, reimbursement may be submitted.

How much will I be reimbursed for remediating the lead issue in my facility?
You will be reimbursed for the actual costs incurred to fix the issue, not to exceed the values shown in the table below.

Remediation Strategy	**Maximum amount of Reimbursement**
Faucet Replacement	$300
Water Cooler Replacement	$1000
Kitchen Sprayer	$400
Fitting Replacement	$200
POU Filter/Under Sink Unit	$400
Service Line Replacement	$3,000
Lead soldered water internal plumbing	$3,000

How to submit a reimbursement request form?
120Water's team will assist you with your reimbursement request, which will be submitted directly through their platform.

How long until I receive my reimbursement check after submission of the reimbursement request?
30 days

What are my responsibilities?
Facility staff must view the short online trainings, create sample plans, collect samples, and share results with the public. Each facility will have access to resources and staff to assist them through the process

How do I enroll?
Click here to enroll. Enrollment ends January 15, 2021

Questions?
South Dakota DENR Contact Information:
For additional questions or information, please contact Erin Fagnan, Drinking Water Program at 605.394.2229

South Dakota DSS Contact Information:
For additional questions or information, please contact Laura Nordbye, Office of Licensing and Accreditation at 605.690.0948