



## *Lead in Schools*

### *Children and Lead*

- In 2012 the CDC concluded that there is no safe level of lead exposure
- Damage done by lead to children is irreversible, prevention is key
- Children are particularly susceptible to the harmful effects of lead
- Even low blood levels, less than 5 micrograms/deciliter, can result in lower IQ scores and academic performance
- 20% of ADHD cases may be attributed to lead exposure
- 2.5% of Utah children have blood lead levels greater than 5 micrograms/deciliter
- More than half of Utah schools were built before 1975 (1986 Safe Drinking Water act requires plumbing materials to be “lead free”)
- Risk increases as infrastructure deteriorates
- Risk increases the longer water is allowed to sit stagnant in pipes
- EPA estimates that 20% of lead exposure comes from drinking water

### *Statistics from 2017 Study of Utah Schools Tested for Lead in Drinking Water*

- 75% of schools participated
- **92% had detectible levels of lead**
- 40% of levels between 1 ppb and 15 ppb
- 4% Over the EPA Action Level of 10 ppb (22,000 children)

### *Mitigation and Remediation*

- Routine flushing prior to use has been shown to reduce risk
- Testing for lead is relatively inexpensive (\$20-\$80) per sample
- Most common remediation is a simple faucet replacement

### *Division of Drinking Water Recommends That Every School and Child Care Facility Have a Written and Implemented Mitigation Plan on Site That Includes:*

- Systematic flushing of pipes at the beginning of every school year and after any extended period of non-use
- Every facility test every consumable tap
- Make the results publicly available

### Division of Drinking Water Mission:

*To protect public health by  
ensuring the quality and  
quantity of Utah's drinking  
water supply.*

#### **Contacts**

Department of Environmental Quality  
**Scott Baird**  
Executive Director  
(801) 536-4000  
Email: [amatheson@utah.gov](mailto:amatheson@utah.gov)

Division of Drinking Water  
**Marie Owens**  
Director  
(801) 536-4207  
Email: [mowens@utah.gov](mailto:mowens@utah.gov)

# Utah K-12 Public Schools 2017 Lead Sampling Results

- ▲ Not Sampled (199 Schools; ~135,000 students)
- < 1 ppb (202 Schools: ~147,000 students)
- 1 - 15 ppb (428 Schools: ~263,000 Students)
- > 15 ppb (20 Schools: 11,042 Students)

**\*Notes:**

1. Charter and Private Schools are not represented.
2. Enrollment data from the Utah State Board of Education Fall Enrollment by School Grade (October 1, 2017)

