

A Participation Overview for Child Care Facilities: Lead In Water Section

The Clean Water for Carolina Kids program is expanding into the classroom

What is the Clean Classrooms for Carolina Kids™ program?

The goal of the Clean Classrooms for Carolina Kids program is to identify and eliminate exposures to environmental hazards where North Carolina children learn and play. This program helps fulfill North Carolina requirements for public schools and child care facilities related to **lead in water**, **lead-based paint**, and **asbestos**.

This flyer focuses on lead in drinking and cooking water.

Who is involved in the program?

The Clean Classrooms for Carolina Kids program is a partnership between the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) and RTI International.

We partner with child care facilities to check for environmental hazards, share results, and help child care facilities take action to ensure healthy learning environments for children. Child care facilities' participation in this program is FREE thanks to funding from the state and federal government.

Why is the program important?

Lead is a toxic metal, and there is no safe level of exposure. Early childhood lead exposure can cause lifelong behavioral and cognitive deficits. Lead in water can come from various sources, including lead service lines, piping, and plumbing, including faucet fixtures and solder. The only way to identify and get the lead out of water is to test every tap used for drinking and cooking.

How does the program work?

Visit our program web page at www.cleanwaterforUSkids.org/carolina to get started.



Is this different from the Clean Water for Carolina Kids program?

Water testing through this program is connected with your facility's participation in the Clean Water for Carolina Kids program. State sanitation guidelines require child care facilities to test their water for lead every 3 years.

Operating centers approaching the time for retesting or facilities operating within a public or charter school will participate in this program based on facility type:

- Child Care Facilities Operating within Public or Charter Schools:**
 If your facility operates in a public or charter school, school staff should enroll and test the entire school. Your child care facility does not need to enroll in this program. You should provide the list of approved taps through your child care sanitation license. School staff filling out the Clean Classrooms for Carolina Kids information can then designate the appropriate taps.
- Established Child Care Facilities:** If your facility is not located in a public or charter school and has already tested drinking and cooking water through the Clean Water for Carolina Kids program, you should retest your facility every 3 years. Per state sanitation guidelines, we will invite your facility to retest when you are approaching 3 years since your last test. [Retesting instructions](#) can be found online and the process is free for all child care facilities.
- New Child Care Facilities:** If your new facility is not located in a public or charter school and did not already test drinking and cooking water through the Clean Water for Carolina Kids program, your facility will need to complete the full testing of taps.

Pre-Enrollment



DESIGNATE PRIMARY CONTACT



Designate a primary contact for the water sampling process.



ATTEND PRE-ENROLLMENT WEBINAR

To access the online portal, facility staff must first attend a pre-enrollment training webinar that will cover lead and asbestos hazards, state requirements, personnel and facility information needed for the program, commonly asked questions, and tips for success. After attending the webinar, the attendee will receive the enrollment PIN to access and enroll through the online portal.



CREATE AN ACCOUNT AND LINK TO YOUR CHILD CARE FACILITY

Your account from www.cleanwaterforcarolinakids.org will work for the expanded Clean Classrooms for Carolina Kids program. If you haven't already, you can create an account at www.cleanwaterforUSkids.org/carolina.

Enrollment Survey



COMPLETE SECTION TRAINING

Watch the lead in water training video to learn more about how to identify drinking and cooking taps, designate sinks as handwash only, enroll in the program, collect samples, and ship them. All staff involved in collecting water samples should review video trainings and written instructions.



ENROLL YOUR FACILITY

Gather the required information and fill out the lead in drinking and cooking water enrollment survey for your facility.

ENROLLMENT SURVEY CHECKLIST

Make sure you have the following before starting the survey:

- Building information
- Student demographics
- Inventory of drinking and cooking taps
- Inventory of taps not used for drinking or cooking
- Water filters (if applicable)
- Drinking water supply information

Sample Collection and Analysis Process



DESIGNATED CONTACT COLLECT AND SHIP SAMPLES

Using the provided sampling kits and our easy-to-use instructions, collect samples of drinking and cooking water and ship the samples back to our labs for analysis.



RTI LABORATORY ANALYSIS

Once RTI receives the shipped samples, our laboratory will analyze them using state-of-the-science laboratory equipment that allows us to detect lead in drinking water at levels as low as 0.1 parts per billion (ppb). It takes about 2-3 weeks from when the samples are shipped to RTI to when results are posted.



VIEW RESULTS

Results reports will include recommended or required next steps. These next steps are designed to help your facility meet state regulatory requirements and support healthy environments for children and staff.

If water from a tap has lead results above the state action level (10 ppb), your facility **must restrict use** for drinking and cooking until mitigation actions have been taken and further testing confirms the tap is below the state action level.



TAKE ACTION

Our team will coordinate directly with your facility, our partners at NC DHHS, and external professionals—like plumbers—to help complete any required on-site work. Visit the program website, www.cleanwaterforUSkids.org/carolina, to learn more about funding and covered mitigation activities.

With your help, we can identify and eliminate exposures to lead hazards where North Carolina children learn and play.



COMMUNICATE

We encourage facilities to communicate with parents, staff, and students throughout the entire process. At a minimum, facilities are legally required to notify parents, staff, and students if environmental hazards exceed state or federal action levels.

For tools to aid communication with your facility's stakeholders, please visit the Resources page on our program website.

REMEMBER

There is no safe level of lead exposure! If lead is found in water but the hazards do not exceed the state action level, we recommend that the facility designate the tap for handwash use only or take no-cost and low-cost mitigation actions to reduce exposure to lead in water (see our Training Resources page, bit.ly/3CK-resources).

QUESTIONS?



F.A.Qs

bit.ly/3CK-faq



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1-855-997-2864



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