



State of Utah

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NEWS RELEASE

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DEQ Receives EPA Grant to Test for Lead in School Drinking Water
Utah schools and childcare facilities urged to apply for funding

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is encouraging schools and childcare facilities to apply for funds to test for lead in their drinking water after the agency received a \$434,000 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant to cover the cost of testing. Interested facilities should apply by March 31, 2020, for the best chance to receive grant money.

DEQ's Division of Drinking Water (DDW) recently launched a [Lead-free Learning Initiative](#) to support the distribution of grant monies and provide important information to schools, childcare programs, and parents about the [EPA grant](#), [voluntary testing parameters](#), and ways to reduce lead in drinking water [at school](#) and [at home](#).

“We are committed to providing all Utah children with safe drinking water,” explains Marie Owens, drinking water director. “Schools and childcare programs that test their buildings for lead reduce children’s risk of exposure and ensure a lead-free learning environment.”

Young children and infants exposed to lead are at risk for delays in their physical and mental development, lower IQ levels, and brain damage. Because children spend a significant amount of their time at school, it is critical that these facilities — particularly those serving children ages six and under — know if their drinking water contains lead.

DDW is currently accepting [applications](#) for funding. Public schools, charter schools, Head Start programs, and licensed childcare facilities are eligible to participate. Private schools are not eligible. Test results using grant funds must be made available to the public.

The Division will review applications received by the March 31 deadline and determine if the grant will cover the costs for all applications submitted. If the total amount requested exceeds the funds available, DDW will prioritize applications based on the community’s financial need and the number of children under six served by the building.

If funding remains after the application deadline, DDW will hold an open enrollment period. Eligible facilities can apply during this open enrollment period, and grant funds will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

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About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) mission is to safeguard and improve Utah's air, land and water through balanced regulation. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah's air, land and water. For more information, visit www.deq.utah.gov, follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.