



DOD SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT SERVICES STEERING COMMITTEE FACT SHEET Clarification of Lead and Copper Rule Drinking Water Sampling Practices

This fact sheet summarizes the proper Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) sampling practices provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2016.

Since implementation of the LCR in 1992, many States and water systems may have adopted some sampling practices that do not meet the intent of the LCR and result in improper sample collection. These practices are:


















- Removal of faucet aerators prior to collecting a sample;
- Practice of pre-stagnation flushing; and
- Use of sample containers with small openings affecting sample collection flow.

They can result in non-representative samples being collected that may significantly underestimate lead levels, inaccurately characterize the effectiveness of corrosion control treatment, and ultimately allow a potentially significant health risk to go undetected.

DOD Installation drinking water program managers and water system personnel should ensure that these practices are not part of their LCR sampling procedures and directions regardless of whether residents, contractors, preventive medicine, or Installation personnel collect samples. The table summarizes the practices to avoid and provides recommendations for changing LCR sampling procedures and directions to ensure proper LCR samples collection. Installations are encouraged to check with State or Local regulatory authorities regarding additional provisions or requirements pertaining to proper LCR sampling practices.

The Technical Information Paper, "Clarification of Lead and Copper Rule Sampling Practices" provides additional information and a more detailed discussion about proper LCR sampling practices.

Table. LCR Sampling Practices to Avoid and How to Avoid Them

LCR SAMPLING PRACTICE	 DO NOT...	 DO...
Faucet Aerator Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Remove the aerator prior to collecting a sample.  ...Include language in sample directions that requires removal of the aerator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Leave the aerator untouched and intact prior to and during sample collection.  ...Include language in sampling directions that prohibits removal of the faucet aerator.
Pre-Stagnation Flushing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Flush or run the water from the faucet prior to letting the water sit for at least six hours before sample collection.  ...Include language in sample directions that requires running or flushing the faucet prior to letting the water sit unused. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Avoid intentionally flushing a faucet prior to letting water sit unused at least six hours before sample collection.  ...Ensure sampling directions do not include pre-stagnation flushing.
Sample Flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Prescribe a specific flow in sample directions.  ...Specify a low flow in sample directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Include language in sample directions to collect a sample as though the person was filling a glass of water or pot for cooking.
Wide-Mouth Sample Containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Use containers that are narrow-necked with small openings. <div style="text-align: center;"></div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  ...Use wide-mouth containers with large openings. <div style="text-align: center;"></div>