When should I take action?

There is no safe level of lead for children. EPA encourages schools to prioritize remediation efforts based on lead sample results and to use the steps in the toolkit to pinpoint potential lead sources to reduce their lead levels to the lowest possible concentrations.

Before sampling, facilities should establish a plan on how they will respond to their sample results to protect the school and child care facility population from lead in drinking water. This may be dependent on a variety of factors (e.g., age of plumbing, population, water corrosivity, available resources, and other school and child care program priorities). EPA recommends that you prioritize remediation of drinking water outlets with the highest lead levels.

Make sure to also check with your state and local health department. They may have guidance or even requirements that include a lead remediation trigger.

Note: EPA's Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) establishes a lead action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) for water systems and facilities that have and/or operate their water source (e.g., own their own well). If the 90th percentile lead level concentration of tap samples exceeds the 15 ppb action level, water systems must take additional actions, such as optimizing corrosion control, public education, and lead service line replacement. The action level for lead is not a health-based standard and is based upon EPA's evaluation of available data on the ability of corrosion control to reduce lead levels at the tap. The action level is a screening tool for determining when certain treatment technique actions are needed.