

Lead in School Drinking Water Remediation Reimbursement

Requirements for reimbursement requests in the Survey Management and Response Tool (SMART) reporting application on Health Commerce System (HCS)

The SMART application is an easy tool that schools can use to request reimbursement for remediation of school drinking water outlets above the action level of 5ppb. Schools interested in being reimbursed for remediation projects must complete all remediation projects prior to submitting any reimbursement requests within the SMART application. Remediation of outlets that did not exceed the action level of 5ppb are not eligible for reimbursement.

How to get started

- Ensure your school superintendent or BOCES program manager has completed New York State Education Department (NYSED) Form FB on the State Aid Management System (SAMS) that is used for NYSED Building Aid. This form was updated in 2024 to include additional attestation language specific to the review of lead remediation reimbursement.
- Submit all SMART reporting for school and BOCES buildings for this compliance period.
 - Information about how to access the HCS and reporting data in the SMART reporting application can be found on the Lead Testing in School Drinking Water [website](#) and in earlier sections of the guidance manual.
- Review Lead in School Drinking Water results, then school staff, administrators, and superintendents should work closely to evaluate building needs and identify a remedial action plan that works best for each school building.
 - This remedial action plan must be posted on the schools' website along with testing results.
- Remedial action plans must ensure that construction for remediation projects have appropriate permits from NYSED.

Reimbursable remediation projects include:

- Post remediation sampling
- “Do Not Drink” or equivalent signage for outlets taken out of service
- Permanent removal of outlets
- Installation of engineering controls (locks, keys, etc)
- Initial installation of individual outlet (point of use) water filtration system
- Installation and replacement of taps
- Installation and replacement of drinking water fountains/bubblers
- Installation and replacement of aerators
- Outlets remediated using other methods
 - Replacement of cold-water supply piping
 - Replacement of components that contain lead solder
- Labor costs related to remediation methods described above
 - Including but not limited to hourly rate of school staff, hired contractors, or other technicians needed to remediate outlets above the action level.

When is a NYSED permit required for remediation?

The following are remediation projects that DO NOT require a permit from NYSED:

- Installation of individual outlet (point of use) water filtration system(s).
- Replacement of outlets that have the same design specification as the original outlet. For example, replacing a water fountain with another water fountain.
 - Please note that replacement of a drinking fountain with a bottle filler only is not considered in-kind. The plumbing code does not consider a bottle filler by itself to count as a drinking fountain. The addition of a bottle filler option at a drinking fountain is acceptable.
 - A double level drinking fountain must be replaced with a double level drinking fountain to maintain accessibility.
- Replacement of outlets that have the same design specification as the original outlet for readily accessible cold water supply piping which does not impact other building components (walls, cabinets, flooring, hazardous materials, etc.).

All other projects will likely require a NYSED permit. Contact NYSED's Office of Facilities Planning for more information on permitting. EMSCFP@nysed.gov; website: <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/>

Contact NYSED's Office of State Aid with questions regarding Form FB. Email: OMSSAMS@nysed.gov; website: <https://stateaid.nysed.gov/build/>

Submitting information for lead remediation reimbursement

In school buildings where reported exceedances have been fully remediated, and post-remediation testing indicates that no outlets exceed 5ppb, schools can complete the remediation reimbursement questions in the SMART survey.

Steps to submit for lead remediation reimbursement:

1) Schools should be done with all remediation and have all cost invoices and receipts in hand. Then, you should mark Question 18 in the existing SMART survey as "Complete."

- Question 18 asks "**Identify the status of remediation**" with response options of Not started, Ongoing, Complete, N/A (not applicable).
 - Only select N/A if there are no taps that exceed 5ppb upon initial sample testing.

Remediation

18. Identify the status of remediation: *

Reimbursement

Not Started

Not Started

Ongoing

Complete

N/A

2) Schools should then fill out the Remediation section with the methods used to remediate outlets that exceeded the action level of 5ppb. These should match the invoices provided.

- Please note in order to receive reimbursement you must email your invoices/receipts to lead.in.school.drinking.water@health.ny.gov

3) Questions 19 and 19a require schools to review remediation plans and ensure projects that require permits are properly permitted.

- 4) Questions 20-31 ask about specific remediation methods that are eligible for reimbursement.
- These questions ask about the number of outlets remediated using specific methods.
 - All questions must be answered to submit reimbursement requests, even if these methods are not used.

18. Identify the status of remediation: * ?

19. Did the selected remediation method(s) require a permit from NYSED? * ?

20. Number of outlets permanently removed: * ?

21. Number of outlets remediated with permanent signage: * ?

22. Number of outlets remediated with engineering controls: * ?

23. Number of point of use water filter units purchased and installed: * ?

24. Number of replacement filter cartridges purchased and installed: * ?

25. Number of taps purchased and installed: * ?

26. Number of aerators purchased and installed: * ?


27. Number of fountains/bubblers purchased and installed: * ?

28. Number of outlets remediated using other methods: * ?

29. Description of other methods of remediation. Explain why these methods were used rather than any of the methods listed above. * ?

30. Number of post-remediation samples collected: * ?

31. Total number of outlets remediated: * ?



5) Once you enter all remediation methods used you will be prompted to Question 32. Question 32 asks “**Are you requesting reimbursement for remediation of outlets that exceeded the action level?**” with response options of No, Yes. If you select Yes it will open the reimbursement section of the SMART survey. You will be required to answer all questions, even if you are not requesting reimbursement for that method of remediation.

- Do not select ‘Yes’ unless you have all invoices/receipts in front of you and ready to enter
- You must email all invoices/receipts used to fill out the SMART survey to lead.in.school.drinking.water@health.ny.gov in order to receive reimbursement

Lead reimbursement reporting will be available after a school or BOCES building has completed all remediation and post-remediation sampling for all outlets reported in this form and zero applicable outlets exceed the action level of 5ppb. After all outlets are remediated, retested, and no longer exceed the action level, Question 18 can be answered as "Complete". Then, you will gain access to additional questions to submit information for remediation reimbursement, if applicable. All remediation projects involving large scale construction must have appropriate permits from the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

Reimbursement

32. Are you requesting reimbursement for remediation of outlets that exceeded the action level?: * ?

Once you select 'Yes' you will be required to fill out the reimbursement section. Do not select 'Yes' unless you have all cost information ready to enter.

Attestation

6) Questions 33-43 ask about specific costs related to remediation methods used. You should report total costs rounded to the nearest dollar. You must answer all questions, even if that remediation method was not used.

- Ensure the total costs reported in Questions 33-42 add up to the total reimbursement requested in Question 43

32. Are you requesting reimbursement for remediation of outlets that exceeded the action level?: * ?

Once you select 'Yes' you will be required to fill out the reimbursement section. Do not select 'Yes' unless you have all cost information ready to enter.

33. Total cost of outlets permanently removed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

34. Total cost of "Do Not Drink" or equivalent signage purchased and installed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

35. Total cost of engineering controls purchased and installed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

36. Total cost of point of use water filter units purchased and installed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

37. Total cost of replacement filter cartridges purchased and installed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

38. Total cost of taps purchased and installed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

39. Total cost of aerators purchased and installed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

40. Total cost of fountains/bubblers purchased and installed (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

41. Total cost of remediation using other methods (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

42. Total cost of post-remediation samples (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

(Do not include initial sampling costs).

43. Total reimbursement being sought for this building (round to the nearest dollar): * ?

7) You will be required to fill out the Reimbursement Contact section for Questions 44-46. This should be the contact for remediation reimbursement related expenses.

Reimbursement Contact

44. Contact name and title: * ?

(For example, "John Smith, Director of Facilities").

45. Contact email address: * ?

46. Contact phone number: * ?

8) You must read the Attestation requires that lead remediation reimbursement requests be reviewed and approved by school superintendents or BOCES building managers. You are also

acknowledging that you must email invoices to lead.in.school.drinking.water@health.ny.gov in order to receive reimbursement.

Attestation

By clicking the 'Save and Submit' button, I attest that all the data entered above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, that I understand such information shall be used for assessing regulatory compliance, and that I am authorized to submit this data on behalf of the school district or BOCES. I acknowledge the need for mitigation of school fixtures as necessary, due to the finding of elevated lead in tap water (greater than 5 ppb) as detailed above, and that the costs for mitigation as described above are necessary and adequate to address any lead exceedance in the drinking water.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that any remediation reimbursement will require an affidavit from the Superintendent or Chancellor in accordance with the certification requirements stated in Form FB of the State Aid Management System, and that the Superintendent, Chancellor or other designated representative will use the remediation reimbursement claims made here when completing said affidavit.

Lastly, I acknowledge that in order to be eligible to receive remediation reimbursement the Department of Health must receive a copy of all invoices and receipts related to the reported costs of remediation. Invoices must be sent to: lead.in.school.drinking.water@health.ny.gov.

Prior to submitting remediation reimbursement, schools should ensure that lead in drinking water sampling data is updated in SMART. Schools should review Questions 11-15 as additional results, including post-remediation sampling results, are available. Each school building should only submit the portion of the form with remediation reimbursement information (Questions 32-46) once during the compliance period, after all data in the form is finalized. Once a request has been submitted, we ask that no further requests be submitted for a school building during the same compliance period. Responses to questions about reimbursement should only include costs incurred due to outlets with drinking water containing lead levels higher than 5ppb sampled during this compliance period.

When does remediation reimbursement qualify for lead remediation reimbursement versus NYSED building aid?

- Construction projects that are conducted solely to remediate outlets used for cooking or drinking that have been tested in the 2026-2028 compliance period and exceed the action level of 5ppb are eligible for Lead Remediation Reimbursement.
- Any work that requires walls, floors, or ceilings to be removed and replaced in order to remediate lead in drinking or cooking water can be reimbursed under the lead remediation reimbursement program.
 - Projects that require this level of remediation will likely require a construction permit from NYSED.
- Projects where only one component of the project is to remediate lead in drinking or cooking water can request reimbursement for the portion of the project associated with lead remediation. A separate allocation for the remainder of the project should be submitted to NYSED for building aid funds. Remediation costs submitted for lead in drinking water shall be indicated on the form FP-F submitted to the Office of Facilities Planning. In the 'source of funds' section, indicate "DOH Lead" on the "Other" line.
- Any reimbursement requests for projects completed outside the 2026-2028 compliance period cannot be reimbursed.

What is the process to review lead remediation reimbursement requests and the timeline for reimbursement?

- The Department of Health will review the number of outlets tested, the number of outlets remediated, the method of remediation, and the costs associated with remediation as part of the reimbursement request and may follow-up with schools if requests:
 - Exceed reasonableness of cost.

- Use any remediation methods defined as "other" methods not fully described
 - Contain errors within the submission
- The State Education Department will review Form FB or equivalent, including an attestation related to School Lead in Drinking Water sampling and remedial actions. The Department of Health will work in conjunction with the State Education Department to ensure that the superintendent attests to having seen the lead in school drinking water results and the associated request for remediation reimbursement.
- Lead remediation reimbursement requests will be reimbursed annually. All reimbursement requests submitted prior to December 31st will be reviewed and paid in the next calendar year.
 - Ex: Submissions made in 2026 will be paid by the end of the 2026-2027 school year

Health Commerce System resources:

health.ny.gov/leadschoolwater

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/docs/hcs_smart_access_2026.pdf