

**Union College Water Initiative (UCWI)**  
<http://minerva.union.edu/hollochk/water/index.html>

Following the well-known lead contamination problems with the water system in Flint, Michigan, there has been a heightened awareness of drinking water quality. New York has mandated that all public schools test their drinking water systems for lead. To expand drinking water testing in other areas, the Geology Department has established the Union College Water Initiative (UCWI). Our goal is to provide free analyses of drinking water for the heavy metals lead, copper, and zinc.

## **FAQ**

- Who analyzes the samples? *Union College students, under the supervision of Union College faculty.*
- How are the samples analyzed? *By inductively-coupled plasma–mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) in the Geology Department.*
- What are we analyzing? *We are currently analyzing for lead, copper, and zinc concentrations in drinking water.*
- Why are we doing this? *To provide analyses of potentially hazardous metals in drinking water, and to raise awareness of drinking water quality issues. Is your water safe to drink, given EPA regulations?*
- Are we a certified analytical lab? *No. Our analyses are good, but we are not certified by any local, state, or federal agency. Our analyses are provided on an as-is, informational basis.*
- How will we communicate results? *In most cases results will be e-mailed to sample collectors. With personal and detailed address information removed, the data will also be available online on the UCWI web page.*

## **Sample Instructions**

- A. Cold drinking water taps only.
- B. Fill out the form below for samples you collect. Write legibly, please.
- C. Samples should be collected in the provided bottles. Do not rinse or touch the inside of the bottle.
- D. **If possible, the sample should be first draw** – the faucet has not been used in the past 8 to 18 hours. This will allow for determination of worst-case contamination from the pipes. Do not let the water run – *fill immediately*.
- E. A second sample from the same tap, after letting the water run for 1 to 2 minutes, will show if any contaminated water can be easily flushed out.
- F. When sampling the water, don't let the bottle lip touch the faucet (to prevent scale or rust contamination).
- G. Bring all samples to: c/o UCWI, Geology Dept., Room 310, Olin Building, Union College, Schenectady, NY, 12308.

Contact: UCWI, Geology Department, Union College, Schenectady, NY, 12308, [hollochk@union.edu](mailto:hollochk@union.edu) or [freyh@union.edu](mailto:freyh@union.edu).

Sample ID*	Sample location (building, floor, room)	Sampling date, time	Fixture code§	Sample type†	Comments

**\*Sample ID:** The number on the bottle label.

**§Fixture code:** DF=drinking fountain, FF=filtered fountain, BF=bathroom faucet, CF=classroom faucet, KF=kitchen faucet, LF=laboratory faucet, O=other, please explain.

**†Sample type:**

- 1 First draw, faucet has not been used in the past 8–18 hours, and this is the first sample.
- 2 Second draw, faucet has been left to run 1–2 minutes since the first draw.
- R Water source has been in routine use for some time prior to sampling.
- U Water source has been used an unknown amount prior to sampling.

**Comments:** Any pertinent information will be useful.

Address of the place where samples were taken\_\_\_\_\_

Person doing or supervising the sampling\_\_\_\_\_

Contact e-mail (results will be communicated by e-mail):\_\_\_\_\_