

# A NOTICE TO PARENTS, GUARDIANS, and STAFF

## *North Shore Central School District*

### Lead Testing of School Drinking Water

[October 17, 2018]

Safe and healthy school environments can foster healthy and successful children. To protect public health, the Public Health Law and New York State Health Department (NYSDOH) regulations require that all public schools and boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) test lead levels in water from every outlet that is being used, or could potentially be used, for drinking or cooking. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 15 parts per billion (ppb), which is equal to 15 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ), the NYSDOH requires that the school take action to reduce the exposure to lead.

#### What is first draw testing of school drinking water for lead?

The “on-again, off-again” nature of water use at most schools can raise lead levels in school drinking water. Water that remains in pipes overnight, over a weekend, or over vacation periods stays in contact with lead pipes or lead solder and, as a result, could contain higher levels of lead. This is why schools are required to collect a sample after the water has been sitting in the plumbing system for a certain period of time. This “first draw” sample is likely to show higher levels of lead for that outlet than what you would see if you sampled after using the water continuously. However, even if the first draw sample does not reflect what you would see with continuous usage, it is still important because it can identify outlets that have elevated lead levels.

In accordance with health department requirements, we recently tested water outlets that had plumbing upgrades. We tested the following number of outlets in each building. The outlets tested were limited to water fountains, MS Science rooms 201 & 202 sinks and the HS Field house hand-washing sink.

Glen Head Elementary School -10

Glenwood Elementary School – 14

Sea Cliff Elementary School -16

North Shore Middle School – 27 initial / 2 follow up

North Shore High School – 17

A total of 84 outlets were tested, out of that number, two outlets were found to have lead levels above the action level (15 ppb). 1) Middle School Locker Room Water Fountain & 2) MS room 202 Lab sink. Full lab results can be viewed M-F 8am-4pm upon request in the Buildings & Grounds office. A snap shot of the results and follow up results of the two outlets that tested above the limit, can be found below. All other outlets (82 total) tested below the action level.

#### What are the results of the first draw testing?

##### Middle School – Girls Locker Room Water Fountain 9/10/18

180910P077	9	Basement, Girls Locker Room / Water Fountain; Initial	1.00	31.6	$\mu\text{g/L}$	H
180910P078	10	Basement, Girls Locker Room / Water Fountain; 30 Sec. Follow-up	1.00	5.64	$\mu\text{g/L}$	

##### Middle School – Girls Locker Room Water Fountain (Follow up sampling) 9/20/18

180918C041	1	BS-LR-MS13-1A; Initial	1.00	20.5	$\mu\text{g/L}$	
180918C042	2	BS-LR-MS13-2A; Follow-up (30 sec Flush)	1.00	1.53	$\mu\text{g/L}$	

### Middle School - Science Lab 202 sink 9/10/18

180910P089	21	Room 202 / Northwest Lab Table Sink D; Initial	1.00	22.8	µg/L	H
180910P090	22	Room 202 / Northwest Lab Table Sink D; 30 Sec. Follow-up	1.00	<1.00	µg/L	

### Middle School- Science Lab sink 9/20/18 (Follow up sampling (9/20/18))

180919C343	3	01-RM-202-1A; Initial	1.00	6.09	µg/L	
180919C344	4	01-RM-202-2A; Follow-up (30 sec Flush)	1.00	<1.00	µg/L	

All other outlets (82 total) tested below the action level of (15 ppb).

### What is being done in response to the results?

- *Upon discovering, that the water fountain in the Middle School Girls locker room had elevated lead levels. The unit was immediately taken out of service and the water to the unit was shut off.*
- *Upon discovering that a sink in science lab 202 had elevated lead levels, district personnel confirmed that proper signage was in place that indicates that water is not to be consumed. The room is supervised by a teacher when in use and the Chemical Hygiene plan also contains a provision that states, "All water outlets that reside in the science labs and associated areas are not to be used as sources of drinking water or used as sources of water for cooking." The health department considers this acceptable and no further action is required.*

### Follow up action

- *Middle School Girl's Locker room water fountain will remain off. The water fountain in the Gym lobby is accessible for water. District personnel will look into replacing the locker room unit and check the pipes that supply water to this unit.*
- *No further action is needed in MS Science room 202*

Outlets that tested with lead levels above the action level (15 ppb) were removed from service, unless an outlet is a sink faucet needed for handwashing. Or if a sink was in a science room and met the criteria for remaining in service. In these cases, a sign was already posted at the outlet indicating that the sink is not to be used as a source for drinking water. Outlets that tested below the action level remain in service with no restrictions.

### What are the health effects of lead?

Lead is a metal that can harm children and adults when it gets into their bodies. Lead is a known neurotoxin, particularly harmful to the developing brain and nervous system of children under 6 years old. Lead can harm a young child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. Lead exposure during pregnancy may contribute to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. There are many sources of lead exposure in the environment, and it is important to reduce all lead exposures as much as possible. Water testing helps identify and correct possible sources of lead that contribute to exposure from drinking water.

## **What are the other sources of lead exposure?**

Lead is a metal that has been used for centuries for many purposes, resulting in widespread distribution in the environment. Major sources of lead exposure include lead-based paint in older housing, and lead that built up over decades in soil and dust due to historical use of lead in gasoline, paint, and manufacturing. Lead can also be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, foods, plumbing materials, and cosmetics. Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies but drinking water could become a possible source of lead exposure if the building's plumbing contains lead. The primary source of lead exposure for most children with elevated blood-lead levels is lead-based paint.

## **Should your child be tested for lead?**

The risk to an individual child from past exposure to elevated lead in drinking water depends on many factors; for example, a child's age, weight, amount of water consumed, and the amount of lead in the water. Children may also be exposed to other significant sources of lead including paint, soil and dust. Since blood lead testing is the only way to determine a child's blood lead level, parents should discuss their child's health history with their child's physician to determine if blood lead testing is appropriate. Pregnant women or women of childbearing age should also consider discussing this matter with their physician.

## **Additional Resources**

**For more information regarding the testing program or sampling results,**

contact *John Hall* at (516) 277-7835, or go to our school website: [www.northshore.k12.ny.us](http://www.northshore.k12.ny.us)

**For information about lead in school drinking water, go to:**

[http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/lead\\_testing\\_of\\_school\\_drinking\\_water.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/lead_testing_of_school_drinking_water.htm)

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/LeadTestinginSchoolDrinkingWater.html>

**For information about NYS Department of Health Lead Poisoning Prevention, go to:**

<http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/lead/>

**For more information on blood lead testing and ways to reduce your child's risk of exposure to lead, see "What Your Child's Blood Lead Test Means":**

<http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2526/> (available in ten languages).