

Date: September 26, 2016
From: Eric Miller, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services
Steve Ruelli, Director of Operations
Re: Water Testing Status Report

Guiding Question: *Now that we have completed testing and remediation for our high priority water sources throughout the District, what additional information has been gathered in order to analyze and evaluate testing for our low priority water sources? What recommendation is the administration making based on consultation from field experts?*

Background:

During spring of 2016, the District conducted sample precautionary water testing for lead to ensure a safe learning environment for students and staff. Of the 25 sample water tests recommended by the District's environmental testing consultant, one came back positive for elevated lead levels. This prompted additional testing of all high priority water sources, specifically drinking water fountains and kitchen taps throughout the entire District that yielded additional positive test results. Based on results from the high priority water sources, those with elevated lead levels above EPA standards were either remediated or removed.

Description

Throughout the testing and remediation process, we have worked closely with several experts including Hygieneering (Environment testing consultant), Cook County Department of Health (Lead specialist), and Dr. Jerry Leikin, Director of Medical Toxicology with NorthShore University HealthSystems-OMEGA. All of the consultations with these experts suggested that District efforts to immediately test, re-test and remediate or remove high priority waters sources was the best course of action. As the testing and remediation for the high priority water sources concluded, the administration continued to work closely with these experts to evaluate and guide the recommendation for the next steps the District should take. This effort included gathering additional information and analyzing the cost estimates to test our low priority water sources including hand washing stations and other non-consumed water sources.

The Cook County Department of Health has advised the District that we have been responsive and responsible in our initial efforts to test high priority water sources that are consumed by students, and that additional testing for lower priority waters sources may not prove to be beneficial. Hygieneering has confirmed that there are no federal or state regulations that require any drinking water sampling to be conducted for the school district. Additionally, they have advised us that if the District decides to conduct additional sampling, it is recommended the sampling of high priority drinking fountains in the schools. After completing testing, re-testing and either remediation or removal of the District's high priority water sources, the administration has come to a conclusion.

While many of the experts that the District has consulted with recommend a focus on testing high priority water sources, the administration does believe that we should be aware of any lead levels above the EPA's allowable levels in low priority water sources to inform future decision-making.

Additionally, the administration has begun research and development of draft policy on water testing for recommendation to the Board of Education. While the policy development is underway that will provide for a more long-term definitive governance, the administration is recommending a short term temporary solution on how to proceed, follow up and maintain a safe learning environment for our students.

Recommendation

It is recommended by the administration, that the District implement a temporary set of procedures for water testing until further policies can be development and adopted. The administration is recommending a routine three-year testing cycle of all high priority water sources (which includes drinking fountains and food preparation kitchen taps) at an estimated cost of \$7,000 annually. Each year, over the summer months, 3 buildings will have all high priority water sources tested for elevated lead levels.

It is also recommended that random annual sample testing be conducted for all low priority water sources (which includes hand washing faucets and non-consumable water fixtures) at an estimated cost of \$3,000. The District will randomly test approximately 25 low priority waters sources across the District for elevated lead levels. Additionally, it is recommended that signage be placed in all low priority water sources to alert staff and student that the water is not for drinking.