

April 7, 2022

Blairstown Township School District

Dear School Community,

Our school system is committed to protecting student, teacher, and staff health. To protect our community and be in compliance with the Department of Education regulations, the Blairstown Township School District began testing our schools' drinking water for Lead.

In accordance with the Department of Education regulations, the District has implemented immediate remedial measures for any drinking water outlet with a result greater than the action level of 15 µg/l (parts per billion [ppb]). This included turning off the outlet, providing an alternate water source, and leaving the outlet off.

Results of our Testing

Following instructions given in technical guidance developed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, we completed a plumbing profile for our building. Through this effort, we identified and tested all drinking water and food preparation outlets. Of the 22 samples collected, a total of 4 sample locations exceeded the Lead action level established by the US Environmental Protection Agency for Lead in drinking water (15 µg/l).

The table below identifies the drinking water outlets that tested above the 15 µg/l for Lead on a 1st-Draw sample, the actual Lead level, and the remedial actions being completed to reduce the levels of Lead at these locations.

| Sample Location | Results (µg/l or ppb) | Remedial Actions |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Sink Faucet in Library Office 63 | 16.3 | This outlet was typically only used for hand-washing and cleanup. Signs were placed showing that water is not for consumption. |
| Chiller in Hallway outside Room 6, right side | 21.8 | Chiller was not being used. It remains turned off and out of service. |
| Chiller in Hallway outside Room 6, left side | 41.6 | Chiller was not being used. It remains turned off and out of service. |
| Chiller in Hallway outside Room 27 | 416 | Chiller was not being used. It remains turned off and out of service. |

Health Effects of Lead

High levels of Lead in drinking water can cause health problems. Lead is most dangerous for pregnant women, infants, and children under 6 years of age. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. Exposure to high levels of Lead during pregnancy contributes to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. In young children, Lead exposure can lower IQ levels, affect hearing, reduce attention span, and hurt school performance. At *very* high levels,

Lead can even cause brain damage. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of Lead more than healthy adults.

How Lead Enters our Water

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like groundwater, rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing Lead in the water distribution system and in building plumbing. These materials include Lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass, and chrome-plated brass faucets. Federal regulations banned the use of Lead solder containing greater than 0.2% Lead, and restricted the Lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials. However, even the Lead in plumbing materials meeting these new requirements is subject to corrosion. When water stands in Lead pipes or plumbing systems containing Lead for several hours or more, the Lead may dissolve into the drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning *may* contain fairly high levels of Lead.

Lead in Drinking Water

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of Lead poisoning can significantly increase a person's total Lead exposure, particularly the exposure of children under the age of 6. EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20% or more of a person's total exposure to Lead.

For More Information

A copy of the test results is available in our central office for inspection by the public, including students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents, and can be viewed between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and are also available on our website at www.blairstownelem.net. For more information about water quality in our schools, contact Matthew Herzer at the Business Office, 908-362-8536.

For more information on reducing Lead exposure around your home and the health effects of Lead, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/Lead, call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or contact your health care provider.

If you are concerned about Lead exposure at this facility or in your home, you may want to ask your health care providers about testing children to determine levels of Lead in their blood.

Sincerely,

Dr. Patrick Ketch
Superintendent of Schools