West Seneca Central School District

Administrative Offices · 900 Mill Rd. · West Seneca, New York 14224-3082
Telephone: (716) 677-3100

Lisa M. Krueger, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Michael Barr
Director of Facilities

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RE: Lead in Drinking Water Testing – Winchester-Potters Elementary School

Dear Winchester-Potters Elementary Parents, Guardians, and Building Occupants,

New York State Public Health Law requires all public schools to test drinking water outlets for lead every three years to help protect student and staff health. As part of this mandate, water outlets that have not been used for 8–18 hours are sampled ("first-draw" samples) and analyzed by a certified laboratory. If lead is detected above the state action level, the outlet must be removed from service for drinking or cooking until it is remediated and passes re-testing.

In 2022, the New York State Legislature and Department of Health updated the regulation by lowering the action level for lead in school drinking water from 15 parts per billion (ppb) to 5 ppb. This more protective standard reflects improved scientific understanding and the recognition that even low levels of lead exposure can pose health risks to children. Because of this updated threshold, some outlets that were previously compliant under the 15 ppb standard now require remediation even though no new plumbing issues have occurred.

Lead in drinking water typically does not come from the water source itself, but rather from building plumbing components—such as older fixtures, solder, fittings, and valves. Even modern "lead-free" components can contain trace amounts of lead that may leach into water when it sits unused in pipes for several hours.

The West Seneca Central School District completed its most recent round of required testing in accordance with the updated regulations. At Winchester-Potters Elementary, several outlets tested above the new 5 ppb action level. All affected outlets were immediately removed from service for drinking and designated as "Hand Wash only/Non-Potable." The district has begun remediation steps, which are focused on drinking and cooking water outlets and include replacing hardware or designating non-critical sources as hand-washing only. Once remediation is complete, each targeted outlet will be re-tested to confirm compliance with safety standards before being restored for drinking or cooking use.

Safe and compliant drinking water remains available throughout the building at bottle-filling stations, drinking fountains, approved kitchen outlets, and designated staff locations.

Winchester-Potters Elementary – Outlets Above 5 ppb and Remediation Actions

Room / Location	Fixture Type	Lead Level (ppb)	Remediation Plan
Kitchen Sink #1 - Near Fire Suppression	Sink	12.2	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Kitchen Sink #2 - Under Window Right	Sink	20.4	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Kitchen Sink #4 - Kettle	Sink	11.6	Temporarily designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable". Remediate, retest, reopen.
Kitchen Sink #6 - Coffee Fill	Sink	22.3	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage. (Remove filling hose/spout.)
Room 130	Sink	26.3	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 114	Sink	6.7	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Library 145A	Sink	53.3	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 102	Sink	7	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 203	Sink	8.4	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 206	Sink	7.6	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 210	Sink	9.5	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 211	Sink	14.4	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 212	Sink	6.1	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 221	Sink	8.9	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.

Rm 222	Sink	5.9	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.
Rm 223	Sink	5.1	Designate "Hand Wash only/ Non-Potable" with signage.

Notes on Sampling:

• All results are measured in parts per billion (ppb).

• All samples are first-draw samples, collected after water has been stagnant in plumbing for 8–18 hours, as required by New York State.

• This method is intentionally conservative and designed to detect the highest possible lead levels that could be encountered after overnight stagnation.

• As a general home practice, families may consider flushing faucets for several seconds before using water for drinking or cooking—especially in older homes.

The district will continue to follow all requirements of the updated Public Health Law and Department of Health regulations. Any outlet that exceeds 5 ppb will remain out of drinking service until it is fully remediated and confirmed safe through re-testing.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.