

Non-Community Water System Public Education Template

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Contact us at 973 267-6398 to obtain a translated copy of the public education materials or to request assistance in the appropriate language.

Harding Township Elementary School found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in some homes/buildings. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

This notice is being distributed to you and all customers/residents of Harding Township Elementary School as a regulatory requirement. Under the Code of Federal Regulations for the Control of Lead and Copper, 40 CFR Part 141 Subpart I, Harding Township Elementary School is required to routinely sample for lead and copper at a minimum number of locations based on the population served.

We collected drinking water samples for lead on 5/21/2020. Below please find a chart illustrating the sampling locations and their results.

Sample Location	Result in ppb
Room 106 Sink	35 ug/L
Room 111 Bubblers	21.1 ug/L
Room 113 Bubblers	5.99 ug/L
Room 109 Bubblers	3.68 ug/L
Teacher Lounge	< 2.00 ug/L
Room 112 Sink	< 2.00 ug/L
Office Sink	< 2.00 ug/L
Room 105 Bubblers	< 2.00 ug/L
Room 104 Bubblers	< 2.00 ug/L
Room 101 Bubblers	< 2.00 ug/L

The 90th percentile value for our water system is greater than the lead action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb). This means Harding Township Elementary School must ensure that water results from the locations sampled do not exceed this level in at least 90 percent of the sites sampled (90th percentile result). Under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act, EPA set the action level for lead in drinking water at 15 ppb. This means utilities must ensure that water from the taps used for human consumption do not exceed this level in at least 90 percent of the sites sampled (90th percentile result). The action level is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. If water from the tap does exceed this limit, then the utility must take certain steps to correct the problem. Because lead may pose serious health risks, the EPA set a Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) of zero for lead. The MCLG is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

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Health Effects of Lead

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. 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. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

In other words, it is the fetus that is at risk because developing fetuses receive lead from the mother's bones. Children and fetuses absorb more lead into their bodies than adults and are more susceptible to its effects on brain development; however, most children with elevated blood lead levels do not exhibit any symptoms, but effects may appear later in life.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, cosmetics, imported spices and other food. Other sources include exposure in the work place and exposure from certain hobbies like shooting ranges and fishing (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children's metal jewelry. *Tip: Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead.* Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like 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 household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipes, brass and chrome-brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of or lined with lead.

When water remains in contact with lead pipes or plumbing materials containing lead over time, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon if the water has not been used all day, may contain elevated levels of lead.

- Homes and buildings in New Jersey built before 1988 are more likely to have lead pipes and/or lead solder.
- Service lines, which may also contain lead, are the individual pipes that run from the well to a home or building. The property owner is also the owner of the service line. Lead service lines are not typically found in non-community systems.

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Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as “lead-free”, may also contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, that contain a maximum of 0.25 percent lead to be labeled as “lead free”. However, prior to January 4, 2014, “lead free” allowed up to 8 percent lead content of the wetted surfaces of plumbing products including those labeled National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) certified. Consumers should be aware of their current fixtures and take appropriate precautions.

EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person’s potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water may receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water. When there are elevated levels of lead in your water, drinking water is likely to be a more important source of exposure.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water

1. Determine if you have lead service line or interior lead plumbing or solder. Property owners are encouraged to check their service line(s) for lead. If your home/building was constructed prior to 1988, it is also important to determine if interior lead solder or lead pipes are present. You can check yourself, hire a licensed plumber, or check with your landlord.

2. Replace plumbing fixtures and service lines containing lead. If there is a lead service line, replace it in full, from well to building. Replace brass faucets, fittings, and valves that do not meet the current definition of “lead free.” The current definition went into effect January 4, 2014; therefore, any “lead free” plumbing materials purchased and/or installed prior to that date should be discarded or replaced. Visit the NSF website at www.nsf.org to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

If you are not the property owner (i.e. owner of the service line) or unable to authorize any service line or plumbing replacements, contact your landlord.

3. Run the cold water to flush out lead. Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer the water resides in plumbing the more lead it contains. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet for about 15 to 30 seconds. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of the plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your health. It usually uses less than one gallon of water. For those with lead service line(s) or until you determine if you are served by one, let the water run from the tap longer based on the length of the lead service line and the plumbing configuration in your home or building. In other words, the larger the home or building and the greater the distance to the well, the more water it will take to flush properly.