Testing for Lead in Drinking Water - Public and Nonpublic Schools

IMPORTANT MANDATED NOTICE: ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)
Lime Kiln Middle School

Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) tests all schools for the presence of lead in school drinking water to comply with state regulation requiring lead testing of drinking water outlets in all Maryland schools.

On October 3, 2019, forty-two (42) lead water samples were collected from Lime Kiln Middle School. Of these lead water samples, two (2)) had levels of lead exceeding the action level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The action level is the concentration of lead which, if exceeded, triggers required remediation.

The elevated lead results from the sample(s) collected at Lime Kiln Middle School were as follows (see attached floor plan):

Fixture #27 (science prep room sink)	98.3 ppb
Fixture #38 (science prep room sink)	23.9 ppb

Once HCPSS received and reviewed the laboratory results, the impacted fixtures were disabled (i.e. shut off, removed) within 24 hours to prevent physical access to the water coming from the fixture. All lead sampling test results are accessible on the school system website after the report is received.

Appropriate actions will be taken, which can include the following:

- Resample within five school days, including a flush sample.
- Evaluate possible cause such as infrequent use, the fixture itself or another component.
- Permanently prevent access to water from impacted fixture(s).
- Provide bottled water as necessary, if there is no other nearby water source or impedes instruction, for faucets in: Family Consumer Science classrooms, kitchens, main teacher lounges and planning areas, and health rooms.
- Replace necessary fixture and/or plumbing.
- Reconfigure plumbing to bypass source of lead.
- HCPSS will NOT ACCEPT point of use filters as a remedial action due to maintenance upkeep and potential hygiene issues due to lack of maintenance.
- Critical outlets:
    - Include only kitchen sink for cooking and washing dishes.
    - Accessible only to school staff.
    - Temporary mitigation of flushing outlet daily until permanent solution allowable as long as flush sample does not exceed action level.
    - Signage stating flushing for 30 seconds prior to each use.

For additional information, please visit https://www.hcpss.org/schools/water-quality-reports/ or contact Christopher Madden at 410-313-8874.

Background Information on Health Effects of Lead Exposure

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters the 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 the body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children and pregnant women. During pregnancy, the fetus receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. 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.

There are many different sources of human exposure to lead. These include: lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, some plumbing material, certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, cosmetics, exposure in the workplace and from certain hobbies, brass faucets, fittings and valves. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead can come from drinking water. While for an infant consuming formula mixed with lead-containing water, this may increase to 40 to 60 percent.

TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER:

1. Run your water to flush out lead: If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 15 to 30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking.

2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula: Lead from the plumbing dissolves more easily into hot water.

Please note that boiling water will not reduce lead levels.

For additional information on reducing lead exposure around your building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at www.epa.gov/lead. If you are concerned about exposure, contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.