

MONROE #1 BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Daniel T. White
District Superintendent



April 26, 2016

AN INFORMATION NOTICE TO PARENTS, GUARDIANS, and STAFF

2016 Voluntary Lead Testing Program of School Drinking Water

Safe and healthy school environments foster healthy and successful children. Schools that receive water from a public water system, such as our District, are not required by federal law to conduct sampling for lead in their drinking water. However, because of our vision of the importance of protecting public health in our school community, a voluntary systematic district-wide sampling program for the presence of lead in the schools' drinking water has been implemented in 2016.

Why Test School Drinking Water for Lead?

Lead from any source can cause health problems in children. Lead is most dangerous for pregnant women, infants, and children under 6 years old. Exposure to high levels of lead during pregnancy contributes to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. If lead is found at any water outlet in a school at levels above 15 µg/L (micrograms per liter), or parts per billion (ppb), the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends taking action to reduce the exposure to lead. This is called an "actionable" level, meaning, if detected, mitigation efforts are needed. The EPA action level of 15 ppb of lead in drinking water was established based on reasonable risk assessments. It is the level that requires additional corrective and educational actions, but does not necessarily directly correlate to increased blood-lead levels. Blood-lead levels are reflective of a variety of factors, such as age; exposure to dusts, paint chips, or soil containing lead; and the amount of lead contaminated water consumed daily. For women exposed to lead in the past, pregnancy can also affect blood-lead levels by releasing lead that was stored in bones. Nationally, the biggest source of increased blood-lead levels in children is the ingestion of lead-based paint chips.

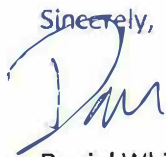
Sources of Lead in Drinking Water

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. The primary source of lead exposure for most children is lead-based paint manufactured before 1978, the year that lead in paint was outlawed. Other sources of lead exposure include lead-contaminated plumbing materials, especially older ones experiencing corrosion. Drinking water exposed to faucets that contain lead is one possible source, but a less common source of lead exposure. In addition, lead can be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics.

Monroe #1 BOCES receives its drinking water from the Monroe County Water Authority (MCWA). MCWA routinely tests for lead and their results meet NYS drinking water standards. While water coming into our buildings is within federal safety standards for lead, plumbing materials including pipes, some soldering material, new brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including even those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute to lead in drinking water. Flushing typically can lower the presence of lead in water.

Schools are not required to test water. However, Monroe #1 BOCES has implemented a stepped-up voluntarily monitoring program in 2016. The District has evaluated the lead concentration in our school drinking water, beginning with a testing of all water outlets. If elevated lead levels were detected, we have taken the necessary steps per the EPA with turn-off until flushing, post-testing, or replacement, as indicated, have been completed.

Sincerely,



Daniel White
District Superintendent

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES:

AAP Healthy Children:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/all-around/Pages/Blood-Lead-Levels-in-Children-What-Parents-Need-to-Know.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Lead home page:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/>

Lead in drinking water:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.htm>

National Institute Environmental Health Sciences:

<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/lead/>

Prepared with assistance from the New York State Department of Health materials by:

Cynthia DiLaura Devore, MD, FAAP

Carl M. Devore, MD, MPH, FACOEM