Lead in Drinking Water – Public and Nonpublic Schools

Updated in response to legislation effective as of June 1, 2021

IMPORTANT NOTICE: ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)

[*Easton Elementary School*]

ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)

All Maryland public and nonpublic schools are required to sample all drinking water outlets for the presence of lead pursuant to the Code of Maryland Regulations. On October 6, 2021, 155 lead water samples were collected from Easton Elementary School. Of these lead water samples, two (2) had levels of lead exceeding the State's revised action level of 5 parts per billion (ppb) *(formerly 20 ppb; 5 ppb effective June 1, 2021)* for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The elevated lead results from the sample(s) collected at Easton Elementary School were as follows:

8.2 parts per billion (ppb) D-110 non-consumption, kitchen, faucet cold, hand washing sink.
18.9 parts per billion (ppb) D-114 non-consumption, custodian office, faucet cold, shower.

ACTION LEVEL (AL)

Effective June 1, 2021, the State's AL for lead in drinking water samples collected from outlets in school buildings has been lowered to 5 ppb. The AL is the concentration of lead which, if exceeded, triggers required remediation of drinking water outlets.

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. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the fetus receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development. 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.

SOURCES OF HUMAN EXPOSURE TO LEAD

There are many different sources of human exposure to lead. These sources include: lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, some plumbing materials, certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics, exposure in the workplace and exposure 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 may come from drinking water, while for an infant consuming formula mixed with lead-containing water this may increase to 40 to 60 percent.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TAKEN

The non-consumption fixtures are not accessible to students. The water has been turned off to both fixtures. A flushed sample has been taken and we are waiting for the results.

NEXT STEPS

If the flushed samples are under the 5 ppb, we will turn the water back on. If the flushed samples are above 5 ppb, we will replace the fixtures.

TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER:

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

Please note that boiling the water will not reduce lead levels.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information, please contact Kevin Shafer, Director of Operations at 410-822-0330. For additional information on reducing lead exposure around your home/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.