



# Worcester Public Schools

Worcester, Massachusetts



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To the Students, Families, and Staff of Wawecus Road Elementary School,

We are sending this letter to provide you with the sampling results for lead and copper at your school and to inform you of any measures we have taken to address any results over the Action Levels. These samples were taken under a voluntary program, the *Massachusetts' Assistance Program for Lead in School Drinking Water*, conducted by the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).

The Worcester Public Schools (WPS) are taking this proactive opportunity, along with 179 of the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts, to expand previous sampling efforts in school buildings to cover every fixture that could possibly be used for drinking water and/or food preparation (except for the bathrooms, slop sinks, and science and art rooms).

The sampling is being conducted in 51 school buildings, and involved mapping all of the fixtures used for food preparation and drinking water, sampling for lead and copper, and developing corrective action plans when necessary.

### ***Sources and Sampling of Lead and Copper in Drinking Water***

In Massachusetts, most drinking water sources from reservoirs and groundwater do not contain elevated levels of lead or copper. Lead enters drinking water primarily by leaching from plumbing that contains lead, such as a lead service line (all known lines containing lead have been removed) that connects a building to the water main in the street, or from plumbing and fixtures inside a building. Copper enters drinking water primarily by leaching from plumbing that contains copper.

Lead and copper leaching is most likely to occur when the water is heated or is not moving, generally overnight or at other times when the water is not used for several hours. This is why MassDEP requires the fixtures to be sampled eight hours after a building has been fully occupied and in regular use.

### ***Sampling Results for Fixtures for Lead and Copper Limits and Related Action Plan***

Type of Fixture Sampled	Sample Location	Lead result in mg/L*	Lead result after 30 second Flush in mg/L*	Copper result in mg/L	Copper result after 30 second flush in mg/L	Action Plan
NURSES OFFICE ROOM 12	Nurse's sink	0.0259	None detected	N/A	N/A	30 second flush at the beginning of the day
Classroom 1	classroom faucet	0.0762	0.0058	0.43	2.17	"Handwashing Only" sign
Computer Lab Room 6	classroom faucet	0.0898	0.110	5.15	9.6	"Handwashing Only" sign

Classroom 9 (not 19)	classroom faucet	0.0158	0.0013	N/A	N/A	"Handwashing Only" sign
Classroom 3 (not 22)	classroom faucet	0.0322	0.0008	N/A	N/A	"Handwashing Only" sign

\* The Massachusetts Action Levels for drinking water milligrams per liter (also known as parts per million): Lead is 0.015 and Copper is 1.3.

WPS takes these results very seriously, and is taking steps to address identified issues. We are working closely and cooperatively with MassDEP.

***In addition to specific actions in your school, WPS is doing the following activities across the district:***

1. Posting "Handwashing Only Signs" at fixtures with lead and/or copper levels over the Action Level that are not used for drinking water or food preparation. Many of the fixtures above the action levels in the district were sinks used just for handwashing. The Massachusetts Department of Health states that water that contains lead or copper is not harmful if used for handwashing.
2. Providing information to students, parents, teachers, staff and local officials.
3. Limiting water consumption to cold-water faucets for food and beverage preparation.
4. Ensuring that there is adequate water for drinking and food preparation, if and when we have to temporarily take fixtures off-line to conduct further sampling or implement corrective actions.

***The Worcester Water Department's Efforts to Prevent Lead and Copper from Entering the Drinking Water***

The Water Department has taken multiple steps to prevent lead and copper from entering drinking water. All known lead service lines have been removed. At the treatment plant, water is treated to prevent the corrosion of plumbing. This treatment creates a coating within the plumbing that helps to prevent lead and copper from leaching into water that has been sitting in the plumbing and fixtures.

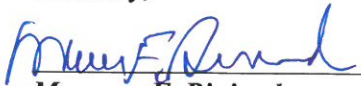
***A Reminder from MassDEP***

The water system at the school is not unlike water systems found in other buildings. Older plumbing systems and fixtures, especially, can contain lead pipes or solder that can allow lead to enter tap water.

***For More Information***

If you have any questions on this information, please contact the WPS Facilities Department at (508) 799-3151.

Sincerely,

  
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**Maureen F. Binienda**  
**Superintendent of Schools**