Worcester Public Schools

Worcester, Massachusetts

Office of the Superintendent

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To the Students, Families, and Staff of **Mill Swan Head Start**,

During recent lead and copper water sampling, some fixtures at our school had levels of lead above the lead detection limit and/or copper above the Action Level. Samples were collected from all taps and fixtures used for drinking, cooking, and medical uses. Samples were taken at each tap or fixture for both a first draw sample with the water standing in the tap overnight as well as a flushed sample after the tap was run. For information on sample collection procedures for school samples please see: https://www.mass.gov/guides/sampling-for-lead-and-copper-at-schools-and-childcare-facilities

In accordance with the USEPA's Revised 3Ts Manual, MassDEP's LCCA program recommends that schools and early education and care programs evaluate and remediate all taps/fixtures used for drinking, food preparation or medical uses with lead results above the Massachusetts certified laboratory detection limit of 1ppb (0.001 milligrams per liter (mg/L)) until the lowest possible concentration of lead is achieved. The Massachusetts Action Level for copper in drinking water is 1.3 mg/L (also known as parts per million).

For MassDEP information on lead and copper in drinking water see:
Lead: https://www.mass.gov/lead-in-drinking-water
Copper: https://www.mass.gov/doc/fact-sheet-copper-and-your-health
For Massachusetts Department of Public Health information on Lead and Copper see:
https://www.mass.gov/orgs/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention-program

Sampling Results and Related Action Plan

Date Sampled	Type of Fixture Sampled	Sample Location	Lead result mg/L	Lead result after 30 second flush mg/L	Copper result mg/L	Copper result after 30 second flush mg/L	Action Plan
4/21/2022	Kitchen faucet	Kitchen near multipurpose room - faucet	**0.0027**	0.00029	N/A	N/A	Flush for 30 seconds at start of the day
4/21/2022	Kitchen faucet	Kitchen near multipurpose room - hose	**0.023**	0.00076	N/A	N/A	Flush for 30 seconds at start of the day
4/21/2022	Nurse's sink	Nurse's office	**0.002**	0.00068	N/A	N/A	Flush for 30 seconds at start of the day
4/21/2022	Classroom faucet	Room 9	**0.0028**	0.00046	N/A	N/A	Post "Handwashing Only" sign

4/21/2022	Classroom faucet	Room 3	**0.0018**	0.0005	N/A	N/A	Post "Handwashing Only" sign
4/21/2022	Classroom faucet	Room 6	**0.0023**	0.00041	N/A	N/A	Post "Handwashing Only" sign
4/21/2022	Kitchen faucet	Kitchen near Disabilities Office	**0.0093**	0.00099	N/A	N/A	Flush for 30 seconds at start of the day
4/21/2022	Classroom faucet	Hallway near steam room	**0.0024**	0.0006	N/A	N/A	Post "Handwashing Only" sign
4/21/2022	Other - sink	Custodian's office	**0.0053**	0.00036	N/A	N/A	Flush for 30 seconds at start of the day

The Massachusetts detection limit for lead is 0.001 mg/L and the Action Level for copper is 1.3 mg/L

The Worcester Public Schools (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 conducting the following activities across the district:

1. Posting signage such as *"Handwashing Only Signs"* at fixtures with lead and/or copper levels over the lead detection limit and/or copper 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, families, staff, and local officials.
3. Communicating with WPS departments such as Nutrition, Nursing, etc., to implement action plans, as needed.
4. Ensuring that there is adequate water for drinking and food preparation if we must temporarily take fixtures off-line to conduct further sampling or implement corrective actions. All water coolers, drinking fountains/bubblers, and bottle fillers have been offline prior to the return to in-person learning in March 2021. Bottled water has been made available to all students and staff during this time.

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. Therefore, MassDEP requires the fixtures to be sampled first thing in the morning after the water in the building has not been used overnight.

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.

Please note that due to concerns regarding Covid-19, fixtures such as water coolers, drinking fountains, and bottle fillers have been offline and unavailable for use over the last two years. Bottled water has been provided to all staff and students since the return to in-person learning in March 2021. We are diligently working to evaluate all drinking water sources in our buildings to make them available for use during the upcoming 2022 – 2023 school year.

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

Sincerely,

Rachel H. Monárrez

Superintendent of Schools