



ELLICOTTVILLE

Central School

5873 Route 219 • Ellicottville NY 14731

District: 716.699.2368 • MS/HS: 716.699.2316 • Elementary 716.699.2318

www.ellicottville.wnyric.org

June 9, 2021

Dear ECS Community:

I'm writing to share important information with you regarding recent lead testing of school drinking water at Ellicottville Central School.

Safe and healthy school environments can foster healthy and successful children. The Public Health Law and New York State Health Department (NYSDOH) regulations require that all public schools and boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) test lead levels in water from every outlet that is being used, or could potentially be used for drinking or cooking. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 15 parts per billion (ppb), which is equal to 15 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$), the NYSDOH requires that the school take action to reduce the exposure to lead and notify all staff and all persons in parental relations to students within 10 business days of receiving the laboratory report.

Sources of Lead

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, and some plumbing materials. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics.

Water in contact with copper plumbing with lead soldered joints or brass fixtures can leach lead out of the plumbing. The use of lead solder in plumbing was banned by EPA in 1987 and in 2014 EPA reduced the amount of lead that plumbing fixtures can contain from 8% to less than 1%.

EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water can receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water.

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 the body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Low levels of lead can also affect adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

Water Sample Results

This year, water samples were collected from 119 fixtures for lead on March 16, 2021. ECS received the initial laboratory report for these samples on June 1, 2021, and the report showed that 9 samples exceeded the "action level" of 15 ppb. A list of the samples that exceeded the "action level" is provided below and in the final lab report on our website titled "Lead in School Drinking Water, Spring 2021 Water Testing Results" (which will be posted in the near future). Samples are required to be collected after the water has been motionless in the pipes for at least eight hours. These "first draw" water samples represent a "worst case" condition because when water sits motionless in pipes and fixtures it can leach lead out of them. The longer the water sits motionless, the higher the likelihood for lead leaching. Once water begins to flow through the pipes and fixtures, lead levels drop. Please note that most schools have had samples that exceeded the Action Level, especially at fixtures that are not routinely used.

Sample #	Classroom or other Location	Fixture/Outlet type	Laboratory Analysis in ppb
145.1-8	Kitchen Bathroom	Sink	49.8
145.1-41	Boys Locker Room Left Sink	Sink	216
145.1-42	Boys Locker Room Right Sink	Sink	17.9
145.1-81	Elementary Library	Sink	19.2
145.1-86	Room 172 Sink Facing Windows	Sink	16.0
145.1-87	Room 172 Sink Facing Left Wall	Sink	17.8
145.1-91	Room 171 Bubblers	Bubbler	25.2
145.1-122	Room 022 Bubblers	Bubbler	20.2
145.1-130	Girls Locker Room Left	Sink	25.0

What is Being Done?

The following steps have been taken to reduce lead exposure from drinking water in fixtures that exceeded the Action Level:

1. If the fixture was a drinking fountain, a bubbler, or a classroom / office sink used for drinking, then it has been turned off, if possible, or otherwise labeled/blocked for use.
2. If the fixture was a bathroom or locker room sink, signs were posted that the water should not be used for drinking.
3. Bottled water has been provided in rooms where an alternate source of drinking water is not reasonably available.

Further testing will be conducted on these water fixtures to determine if the source of lead is from the plumbing or from the fixture itself. If it is found to be from the fixture, then it will be scheduled for replacement and retested. If it is found to be from the plumbing, consideration will be given to replacement / repairs using approved materials.

Should your child be tested for lead?

New York Public Health Law requires primary health care providers to screen each child for blood lead levels at one and two years of age. In addition, at each routine well-child visit, or at least annually if a child has not had routine well-child visits, primary health care providers assess each child who is at least six-months of age, but under six years of age, for high lead exposure. Children found to be at risk for high lead are screened or referred for lead screening.

If your child has not had routine well-child visits since the age of one year and you are concerned about lead exposure to your child, contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.

Moving Forward

We will keep parents, students and staff informed about the progress we make to reduce the lead in our drinking water by posting updates on our website and future letters. In the meantime, for more information on lead in drinking water, please see the enclosed list of resources.

Sincerely,



Robert R. Miller, Superintendent

enclosure