



Testing for Lead in Drinking Water

Although there is no federal law requiring testing of drinking water in schools, except for schools that have their own water supply, Worthington City Schools desired testing be performed as a proactive measure to ensure lead in drinking water concentrations were at acceptable levels.

During the Summer Recess, Lawhon & Associates, Inc., a local Environmental Engineering firm, tested water for lead content in primary drinking outlets (i.e., drinking fountains, kitchen sinks, and approximately 10% of classroom sinks or other potential drinking water sources) from each of our 19 schools.

The end result of this summer's work is that the district has tested below any action levels for lead. The detail of what was done is explained below.

A total of 351 primary drinking outlet locations were sampled as part of this effort. Of those, 14 sample locations that were considered likely drinking water outlets were found to have lead concentrations exceeding the federal action level in the "First Draw" samples (the first 250 mL of water from the outlet after at least an 8 hour period of non-use). These findings are not unusual for buildings constructed prior to 1990 and should not be cause for alarm. "Flushed" samples (where the water was allowed to run for 30 seconds prior to sample collection) were also collected from each of these locations; each of which revealed lead concentrations below the federal action level, indicating that the source of lead is within the fixtures themselves, not the building's plumbing system. Although not required, but following EPA recommendations, the district proactively suspended use of all fixtures in which lead was detected at concentrations exceeding the action level. The district has repaired/replaced those fixtures.

Detailed reports for each school which include information on governmental recommendations, protocols followed, Lawhon & Associates and laboratory certifications, "First" draw and "Flush" draw testing results, results of non-drinking water sources tested, and conclusions and recommendations are available for review on line at the Worthington Schools Website.

For additional information concerning the testing, please contact the Office of Facilities Management at Worthington Schools, 614-450-6000.

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