

A NOTICE TO PARENTS, GUARDIANS, and STAFF
North Warren Central School District
Lead Testing of School Drinking Water
May 22, 2023

Safe and healthy school environments can foster healthy and successful children. To protect public health, 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 5 parts per billion (ppb), which is equal to 5 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{L}$), the NYSDOH requires that the school act to reduce the exposure to lead.

What is first draw testing of school drinking water for lead?

The “on-again, off-again” nature of water use at most schools can raise lead levels in school drinking water. Water that remains in pipes overnight, over a weekend, or over vacation periods stays in contact with lead pipes or lead solder and, as a result, could contain higher levels of lead. This is why schools are required to collect a sample after the water has been sitting in the plumbing system for a certain period of time. This “first draw” sample is likely to show higher levels of lead for that outlet than what you would see if you sampled after using the water continuously. However, even if the first draw sample does not reflect what you would see with continuous usage, it is still important because it can identify outlets that have elevated lead levels.

The following is a summary of the first draw samples conducted on May 3, 2023, which exceed the New York State Department of Health 5 ppb Action Level:

1. A112 Classroom Sink 5.1 ppb
2. D207 Classroom Sink 7.8 ppb
3. D209 Right Classroom Sink 6.6 ppb
4. D212 Classroom Sink 8.3 ppb
5. D216 Classroom Sink 5.7 ppb

Note: The additional 40 water outlets sampled and tested are below the action level of 5 ppb. All sample results are available on the district website. Please click on the link provided below.

<https://northwarrencsd.org/Community/Water%20Results/Lead%20sample%20results%20May%202023.pdf>

In response to the results the North Warren Central School District has taken the following actions:

- Verbal notification to staff in rooms which exceed 5 ppb and written notification to all staff
- Written notification to all parents
- A sign has been posted at the outlet indicating that the sink is not to be used for drinking. **The sink may be used for handwashing only.**
- Outlets that tested below the action level remain in service with no restrictions.
- Retesting of all outlets is required between January 1 and December 31, 2026.

What are the health effects of lead?

Lead is a metal that can harm children and adults when it gets into their bodies. Lead is a known neurotoxin, particularly harmful to the developing brain and nervous system of children under 6 years old. Lead can harm a young child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. Lead exposure during pregnancy may contribute to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. There are many sources of lead exposure in the environment, and it is important to reduce all lead exposures as much as possible. Water testing helps identify and correct possible sources of lead that contribute to exposure from drinking water.

What are the other sources of lead exposure?

Lead is a metal that has been used for centuries for many purposes, resulting in widespread distribution in the environment. Major sources of lead exposure include lead-based paint in older housing, and lead that built up over decades in soil and dust due to historical use of lead in gasoline, paint, and manufacturing. Lead can also be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, foods, plumbing materials, and cosmetics. Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies but drinking water could become a possible source of lead exposure if the building's plumbing contains lead. The primary source of lead exposure for most children with elevated blood-lead levels is lead-based paint.

Should your child be tested for lead?

The risk to an individual child from past exposure to elevated lead in drinking water depends on many factors; for example, a child's age, weight, amount of water consumed, and the amount of lead in the water. Children may also be exposed to other significant sources of lead including paint, soil and dust. Since blood lead testing is the only way to determine a child's blood lead level, parents should discuss their child's health history with their child's physician to determine if blood lead testing is appropriate. Pregnant women or women of childbearing age should also consider discussing this matter with their physician.

Additional Resources

For more information regarding the testing program or sampling results go to our school website:
www.northwarrencsd.org

For information about lead in school drinking water, go to:

http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/lead_testing_of_school_drinking_water.htm

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/LeadTestinginSchoolDrinkingWater.html>

For information about NYS Department of Health Lead Poisoning Prevention, go to:

<http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/lead/>

For more information on blood lead testing and ways to reduce your child's risk of exposure to lead, see "What Your Child's Blood Lead Test Means":

<http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2526/> (available in ten languages).