

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT EVENTS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS:

Key information:

- We are communicating today about precautions that are being initiated this morning in your school by the school district, to ensure that there is healthy and clean drinking water available to all students and staff.
- These actions are in response to results of recent annual testing that the School District voluntarily shared with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection on Monday.
- Those results indicated that a total of 30 school buildings recorded levels ranging from non-detect to above EPA's action level for lead, which is 15 parts per billion. The action level represents the threshold requiring additional testing, monitoring and remediation.
- DEP has requested past test results from previous years from the school district to be able to do a complete analysis of the full data set. No building had more than four samples out of ten above the action level.

We are taking immediate, pro-active , and voluntary action:

- Out of an abundance of caution, the Department of Environmental Protection has advised the Newark Public Schools system to temporarily utilize alternate water sources in those 30 school buildings.
- We are acting immediately on the recommendation and this morning are notifying school officials, parents and students of the results. Actions include:
 - We are providing bottled water for drinking and food preparation at all schools with one or more samples of elevated levels of lead, including your child's school;
 - We have turned off all water fountains at all of these schools;
 - In restrooms, kitchens, and other locations where water needs to remain on for hand washing or dishwashing, we are placing signs advising that the water is safe for that purpose but not for drinking or food preparation.
- Parents should have no concerns about students' water and food consumption at the school while the situation is addressed.
- **Please keep in mind that water can continue to be utilized for hand washing and dish washing.**
- The DEP and the State Department of Health are working in partnership with the district in its efforts to resolve the issue. This includes a plan for immediate, coordinated sampling of all points of entry and taps for all public schools in the district, including charters in district buildings.

Answers to Broader questions:

- There is nothing we take more seriously than the health and well-being of students under our care, and we are taking immediate action.
- DEP has confirmed that lead has not been found within the Newark Water Department's source water. In the vast majority of cases where lead is found in drinking water, it enters through the water delivery system itself when it leaches from either lead pipes, household fixtures containing lead, or lead solder
- Drinking water alone is not typically associated with elevated blood lead levels. It is the buildup of lead from all sources over time that determines whether harmful health effects will occur.
- Lead can cause a variety of harmful health effects. The type and severity of the effects depend upon how much lead has built up in the body over time.
- Children can be given a blood test to measure the level of lead in their blood. If parents are concerned, they can have their children tested by their primary care provider, or if they don't have a primary care provider, at a Newark Health Clinic for free. We will provide this number in our materials.

Childhood Lead Poison Prevention Program Coordinator
94 William Street, Newark
973-733-5323

WIC Coordinator
110 William Street, Newark
973-733-7604

- You can also contact our contact center at 973-733-7333
- We will be providing links with more background information on lead in drinking water.
 - A New Jersey Department of Health fact sheet on lead in drinking water is available at http://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/dw_lead_factsheet.pdf.
 - For more information on lead in water, visit: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/pdf/lead-water-faq.pdf>.