

Summer Drinking Water Update 9.02

1. This summer, we have taken significant steps to make sure that healthy and safe drinking water options are available in all of our schools for the upcoming school year, and are moving forward with a plan approved by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

We have begun to move from short-term to intermediate solutions for water supply in schools where we originally identified elevated levels of lead, as we work with engineers and the DEP to continue to better understand the feasibility of more permanent remedies:

- **We will keep outside drinking water in-place in schools where elevated drinking water levels were first detected**, but have moved away from water bottles to make water jugs available to all schools as we prepare to bring the many safe, non-elevated drinking water sources in these schools back online for students in the coming months.
- **We have turned off any drinking water faucet where an elevated level of lead was detected.** These will remain off as we examine root causes of elevation.
- **We are bringing in experts to install new filtration systems in drinking water sources where results did not exceed federal limits, to ensure that they stay below that threshold going forward.** In addition, we will contract with those experts to monitor and replace filters using advanced monitoring systems.
- **We have taken action in kitchens to ensure they are fully operational.** Anywhere an elevated level of lead has been detected in a kitchen sink, the district is implementing a combination of fixture replacement along with either a new reverse osmosis filtration system or the implementation of new protocols to ensure that these sinks are safe for cooking and food preparation.
- **We have posted signage at non-drinking water sources where any elevated level was detected** to make sure students do not inappropriately consume water in sources not meant for drinking.

2. We have tested every water source in every building in the district (Approximately 8,500 water outlets across approximately 70 locations), and we can reassure you that anywhere an elevated level of lead was detected in drinking water it is turned off.

This extensive effort is taking time, and we appreciate your patience while we make progress.

3. Results are now available for all Priority 1, Priority 2, and a majority of Priority 3 buildings - we finished testing on 8/27 and will provide a summary of Priority 3 results when all are returned.

Results are available on our website at: <http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/drinking-water-resources/> and individual building reports are available in the [“2016 \(Latest Results\)” folder](#)

In reviewing your school report, please be aware that due to stricter protocols for collecting samples and the number of samples collected, that there may be outliers that show higher results than in previous tests. This is not cause for alarm. The district has analyzed these outliers, and nearly all are the result of testing water sources in parts of buildings that are not used, or are associated with “first draw” samples that greatly decrease once the water outlet has been flushed.

4. Results from on-site blood screenings reported in the spring by the Newark Department of Health show no widespread impact for NPS Students.

The New York Times reported on the results from blood screenings conducted by The Newark Department of Health and Community Wellness — noting that “[Few Newark Children Found to Have Elevated Lead After School Water Scare](#).” **These results show that 496 children were tested at NPS sites, and 1 child’s BLL result at those sites was above the current state regulatory limit of 15ppb.**

For context, public health authorities confirm that virtually all New Jersey children are tested for lead before the age of six (i.e before entering school). In 2014, [the last year data is available](#), reports show that approximately 115 Newark children below the age of 6 had blood lead levels above the federal limit.

5. We will continue to provide all available information publicly, and are including information about water quality for families in back to school materials.

In order to ensure that you have as much information as possible about our efforts, here are some permanent resources you can access to get more information:

- **Visit our Drinking Water Resources Web Page:** We have created a stand-alone web page to serve as your primary source for information going forward. Please use the following link to access it:
<http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/drinking-water-resources/>
- **Call us directly at 973-733-7333** with any questions you have about this issue

Thank you.
Newark Public Schools