



James A. Fazzone, Ed. D.
Interim Superintendent

Frederick J. Hillman
Manager of Information Technology/Buildings & Grounds

Re: Lead Sampling in Mercer County Special Services School District

Dear Mercer County Special Services School District Community:

Our school system is committed to protecting student, teacher, and staff health. To protect our community, Mercer County Special Services School District has been conducting testing of our schools' drinking water for lead.

Why Test School Drinking Water for Lead?

High levels of lead in drinking water can cause health problems. Lead is most dangerous for pregnant women, infants, and children under 6 years old. Exposure to high levels of lead during pregnancy contributes to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. In young children, lead exposure can lower IQ levels, affect hearing, reduce attention span, and hurt school performance. At very high levels, lead can even cause brain damage.

To protect public health, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggests that schools and day care facilities test their drinking water for lead. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 15 parts per billion (ppb), EPA recommends taking action to reduce the lead.

Is Our School's Drinking Water Safe?

Yes, our schools' water is safe. Mercer County Special Services School District is currently performing testing of our schools' drinking water for lead. We tested 229 outlets at five school facilities and at our administrative offices. Thirteen samples came back with exceedances.

It is important to note that sampling is still ongoing. Follow-up (flush) samples will be taken at each of the outlets, which indicated lead levels above the specified threshold, to assist in identifying the potential source of the lead at these outlets. Until then, we will be isolating these outlets so that they will not be used for drinking water purposes.

Testing indicated lead at levels higher than the 15 ppb threshold at the following outlets:

Mercer Elementary School – 1 exceedances:

42-MES-73 Staff Lounge Sink 23.8ug/L

Mercer High School – 3 exceedances:

16-MHS-24 Room 128 Sink 54.5ug/L

28-MHS-44 Room 201 Sink 16.2ug/L

33-MHS-49 Room 205 Sink 21.0ug/L

Joseph F. Cappello School – 7 exceedances

5-JFC-52 Cafeteria Dish Sink 33.8 ug/L

13-JFC-21 Room 201 Sink 147ug/L

49-JFC-98 Assessment A Sink 18.6ug/L

50-JFC-99 Assessment B Sink 19.4ug/L

51-JFC-100 Adaptive Workshop Sink 40.3ug/L

55-JFC-103 Resource Room Sink 54.7ug/L

57-JFC-151 Cafeteria Dish Sink 29.7/ug/L

Regional Day School – 2 exceedances

6-RDS-10 Office Sink 24.7ug/L

10-RDS-21- A Pod Kitchen Sink 173 ug/L

Confirmatory flush samples will be taken at each of these outlets. If the fixtures are identified to contain lead or lead parts, we will replace the part or plumbing. While we continue with the sampling process, we will ensure that no one uses these outlets until the problem has been fixed.

How Can I Learn More?

You can see a copy of all of our water testing results at the school district's administrative office, which is open Monday to Friday from (8:30 am to 3:30 pm) and on our Web site at (www.mcsssd.info). For more information about water quality in our schools, please contact me, Frederick J. Hillman, Manager of Information Technologies/Buildings & Grounds at 609-631-2126.. For information about water quality and sampling for lead at home, contact your local water supplier or state drinking water agency.

Sincerely,

Frederick J. Hillman
Manager of Information Technologies/Buildings & Grounds