

Testing for Lead in Drinking Water

For Immediate Release

April 5, 2017

In consultation with the Province of British Columbia and Fraser Health, the Mission Public School District tested the water in 14 School District buildings from over 150 sources to measure the amount of lead in the water at each source. The tests resulted in 39 fountains being decommissioned, one fountain being replaced, re-piping the plumbing for a second fountain that was being replaced, and where necessary installing signs to advise that the water from the faucet or sink must be flushed for 2 minutes before use.

The water test results for the first year of the program were submitted to the Province on March 30, 2017. The School District tested 14 of 23 buildings in the first year. These buildings were determined to be a higher risk for lead in the water due to the age of the buildings. The detailed test results are attached to this news release. The remaining nine buildings were determined to be a lower risk and will be tested in the 2017/2018 school year.

In 2016, the Province approved a policy requiring School Districts to test for lead in drinking water in school facilities to ensure the water quality meets established guidelines. The policy requires School Districts to establish the following four part water quality testing program:

Risk assessment: To be used to prioritize the testing program. Assessments must be based on the age of the School District facilities, recent improvements, and any history of elevated levels of lead in the water.

Water testing: A testing program must be developed in collaboration with Fraser Health. All facilities must be tested once every three years, with a minimum of 1/3 tested each year.

Mitigation plan: For tests results with lead levels above the maximum allowable concentrations of .010 mg/L (as determined by Health Canada), plans may include flushing regimes, deactivation of water sources, installation of filtration systems, plumbing upgrades, or other steps to reduce the concentrations of lead in the water.

Communications: The School District must work with Fraser Health regarding the public communications and the development of mitigation solutions.

Next Steps:

The School District will be reviewing every decommissioned fountain as a result of the testing to determine whether the fountains can be refurbished to eliminate the source of lead in the water, whether any fountains or pipes should be replaced, or whether the fountain should remain decommissioned.

Attachments:

Detailed Water Testing Results – March 30, 2017
Policy for Testing Lead Content in Drinking Water of School Facilities

For More Information, Contact:

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