

November 8, 2016

Re: Results of State Mandated Water Testing for Lead

Dear Community Member:

The Owego Apalachin Central School District is committed to providing a safe, secure learning environment for our students. As part of this commitment, we have complied with the newly released New York State Department of Health regulations regarding lead testing in school water supplies.

The new state regulations require that an “action plan” be developed for any outlet where lead levels above 15 parts per billion (ppb) were found. *Outlet* means any water supply (fountain, faucet, etc.) which is used, or may potentially be used, for drinking or cooking. The action plan must spell out any remedial steps the district plans to take to reduce the levels of lead at those particular outlets.

According to the Department of Health, a short-term remediation of flushing the actionable outlet for a specific amount of time each day is acceptable during the timeframe when a longer-term solution is under development. Long-term remediation may include replacing the outlet, installing a filter, or taking the outlet out of service. It is worth noting that the New York State Department of Health has adopted a threshold for action which is actually lower than the federal EPA limit of 20ppb.

At OA Schools, we have received results for one school thus far - Apalachin Elementary School.

At AES, there were 76 designated water outlets tested September 21, 2016

As a result of testing, 10 outlets were found to be above the state’s actionable level. Seven of the 10 were immediately taken out of service, while three were posted with signs to not consume the water.

Six of the 10 outlets in question were exterior hose bibs/faucets. Of the other four – one was in a Pre-K class where children cannot yet read, so that

faucet was turned completely off (no water can be drawn from it). The other sites were not necessarily accessible by students (one was in a utility sink, another was in a girls' coach's private restroom, and the other was in the teachers' lounge sink). These three received signage, which is within the state's law, and were left in use for hand washing purposes only.

No drinking fountains at AES tested about the state's actionable level.

The OA district is currently working with the industrial hygienist from Keystone Environmental, which performed our water testing.

If you would like more information, you can find a copy of the EPA guidance at: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/toolkit_leadschools_guide_3ts_leadschools.pdf

You can reach Ron Bieber, director of facilities, by calling (607) 687-6210, or e-mail him at bieberr@oacsd.org. You can also contact Dan Scherrer of the Tioga County Health Department at (607) 687-8437.

Sincerely,

Ron Bieber
OA Director of Facilities