

# Lead in Drinking Water – Public and Nonpublic Schools

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE: ELEVATED WATER SAMPLE RESULTS** **New Hope Academy**

### **ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULTS**

All Maryland public and nonpublic schools are required to sample all drinking water outlets for the presence of lead pursuant to the Code of Maryland Regulations. On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 23 lead water samples were collected from NHA. Of these lead water samples, 4 had levels of lead exceeding the action level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The elevated lead results from the samples collected from classroom sinks that were **used only for handwashing and cleaning** at the south wing were as follows:

30.3 parts per billion (ppb) south wing, science room  
27.1 parts per billion (ppb) south wing, language arts room  
55.0 parts per billion (ppb) south wing, social studies room  
76.2 parts per billion (ppb) south wing, literacy room

### **ACTION LEVEL (AL)**

The AL is 20 ppb for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The AL is the concentration of lead which, if exceeded, triggers required remediation.

### **HEALTH EFFECTS OF LEAD**

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the fetus receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults.

### **SOURCES OF HUMAN EXPOSURE TO LEAD**

There are many different sources of human exposure to lead. These include: lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, some plumbing materials, certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics, exposure in the work place and exposure from certain hobbies, brass faucets, fittings, and valves. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water, while for an infant consuming formula mixed with lead-containing water this may increase to 40 to 60 percent.

### **IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TAKEN**

*These 4 sinks had brass faucets which were old and had not been replaced over the course of NHA restoration efforts throughout the years. However, the sinks were NEVER a source of drinking water – there are water fountains on every floor - and served ONLY for hand washing and cleaning. Even though the south wing is completely closed during school vacation, we went ahead and shut off the water supply when the results came in.*

## **NEXT STEPS**

*Next, we replaced all 4 brass faucets. As previously mentioned, NHA's drinking fountains and food preparation sinks have all passed the test with flying colors. We are therefore confident, that as we brought these sinks in question up-to-date, like the rest of our water supply, that our restoration efforts will have resolved this issue and that the forthcoming tests will confirm that.*

## **TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER:**

1. Run your water to flush out lead: If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 15 to 30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking.
2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula: Lead from the plumbing dissolves more easily into hot water.

*Please note that boiling the water will not reduce lead levels.*

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

1. For additional information, please contact our business assistant Mr. Herbert Eisenbart at 301-459-7311 ext. 306. For additional information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead). If you are concerned about exposure; contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.

Although we have informed you about this issue previously and attached the form letter by the State of Maryland, we were asked to combine both letters in order to adhere to the state's regulations in this regard.

Sincerely,



New Hope Academy  
Herbert Eisenbart  
Business Associate