



LACEY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Tradition Of Pride · A Tradition Of Excellence

SHARON ORMSBEE

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

September 16, 2024

Forked River Elementary School
110 Lacey Road
Forked River, NJ 08731

Dear Forked River Elementary School Community,

Our school system is committed to protecting student, teacher, and staff health. To protect our community and be in compliance with the Department of Education regulations, Lacey Township School District tested our schools' drinking water for lead.

In accordance with the Department of Education regulations, Forked River Elementary School will implement immediate remedial measures for any drinking water outlet with a result greater than the action level of 15 µg/l (parts per billion [ppb]). This includes turning off the outlet unless it is determined the location must remain on for non-drinking purposes. In these cases, a "DO NOT DRINK – SAFE FOR HANDWASHING ONLY" sign will be posted.

Results of our Testing

Following instructions given in technical guidance developed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, we completed a plumbing profile for each of the buildings within the Lacey Township School District. Through this effort, we identified and tested all drinking water and food preparation outlets. **Of the 35 samples taken at the Forked River Elementary School, all tested below the lead action level established by the US Environmental Protection Agency for lead in drinking water (15 µg/l [ppb]).**

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. 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. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.

In other words, it is the fetus that is at risk because developing fetuses receive lead from the mother's bones. Children and fetuses absorb more lead into their bodies than adults and are more susceptible to its effects on brain development; however, most children with elevated blood lead levels do not exhibit any symptoms, but effects may appear later in life.

How Lead Enters our Water

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipes, brass, and chrome-brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of or lined with lead.

When water remains in contact with lead pipes or plumbing materials containing lead over time, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon if the water has not been used all day, may contain elevated levels of lead.

- Homes and buildings in New Jersey built before 1987 are more likely to have lead pipes and/or lead solder.
- Service lines, which may also contain lead, are the individual pipes that run from the well to a home or building. The property owner may also be the owner of the service line. Lead service lines are not typically found in non-community systems (e.g., school, office, restaurant, or other buildings on their own well).
- Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as “lead-free”, may also contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, that contain a maximum of 0.25 percent lead to be labeled as “lead free”. However, prior to January 4, 2014, “lead free” allowed up to 8 percent lead content of the wetted surfaces of plumbing products including those labeled National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) certified. Consumers should be aware of their current fixtures and take appropriate precautions.

Lead in Drinking Water

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, cosmetics, imported spices and other food. Other sources include exposure in the workplace and exposure from certain hobbies like shooting ranges and fishing (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children’s metal jewelry.

EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person’s potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water may receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water. When there are elevated levels of lead in your water, drinking water is likely to be a more important source of exposure.

For More Information

A copy of the test results are available in our central office for inspection by the public, including students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents, and can be viewed between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. and are also available on our website at www.laceyschools.org. For more information about water quality in our schools, contact Ms. Sharon Ormsbee at the Lacey Township School District Board Office at 609-971-2000 ext. 1001.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit the EPA's website at **www.epa.gov/lead**, call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or contact your healthcare provider.

If you are concerned about lead exposure, you may want to ask your health care providers about testing children to determine levels of lead in their blood.

Sincerely,

Sharon Ormsbee
Business Administrator/Board Secretary