

CLOSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

340 Homans Avenue • Closter, New Jersey 07624



Vincent McHale
Superintendent of Schools

www.closterschools.org

Floro M. Villanueva Jr.
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

August 7, 2024

Dear Closter Community,

Our school district protects students, teachers, and staff's health. On July 18, 2024, Closter Public Schools, through our environmental engineering consultant, New Wave Engineering, tested all our school's drinking water for lead to protect our community and comply with Department of Education regulations. The regulations required testing for lead in all outlets where water may be consumed within 365 days of the effective date of the regulations. All districts were directed to develop a lead sampling plan that governed the collection and analysis of drinking water samples. In addition, public schools are required to test for lead in drinking water every three years, as described and amended in state regulations.

Closter Public Schools complied with the State Regulations and tested all potable water sources. Should an area tested surpass the Corrective Action Level (CAL) of 15 ppb, corrective action must occur (e.g., replace the fountain, add a filter system, discontinue use).

Results of our Testing

Following instructions in technical guidance developed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, we completed a plumbing profile for each building within the Closter School District. Through this effort, we identified and tested all drinking water and food preparation outlets. ***Of the 39 samples taken, NONE tested above the lead action level established by the US Environmental Protection Agency for lead in drinking water (15 µg/l [ppb]).***

Health Effects of Lead

High levels of lead in drinking water can cause health problems. Lead is most dangerous for pregnant women, infants, and children under six (6) years of age. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys and interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. Exposure to high levels of lead during pregnancy contributes to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. Lead exposure can lower IQ levels, affect hearing, reduce attention span, and hurt school performance in young children. At very high levels, lead can even cause brain damage. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults.

How Lead Enters Our Water

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants because it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like groundwater, 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 building plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass, and chrome-plated brass faucets. In 1986, Congress banned using lead solder containing more than 0.2% lead and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes, and other plumbing materials. However, even the lead in plumbing materials meeting these new requirements is subject to corrosion. When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into the drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning may contain relatively high lead levels.

Lead in Drinking Water

Although lead in drinking water is rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, it can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of children under the age of 6. The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20% or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

For More Information

A copy of the test results is available in the Closter Board of Education Office for inspection by the public, including students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents. It can be viewed between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and is also available on our website at www.closterschools.org. For more information about water quality in our schools, contact Mr. Joseph Scaglione, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, at 201-768-2268.

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 health care provider.

If you are concerned about lead exposure at this facility or in your home, you may want to ask your healthcare providers about testing children to determine their blood lead levels.

Sincerely,



Vincent McHale
Superintendent of Schools