WCPS | Washington County Public Schools

10435 Downsville Pike
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301-766-2800

To: Parents and Guardians

From: Mark Mills, Director of Maintenance and Operations

Date: April 9, 2018

RE: Sharpsburg Elementary School Water Testing Results

The state of Maryland recently passed a law (COMAR 26.16.07) that requires public and non-public schools to test their drinking water outlets for lead contamination and to establish an ongoing program to minimize the risk of exposure to lead in the drinking water at school buildings. The law established an action level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) for lead in drinking water in school buildings. A drinking water outlet is defined as a potable water fixture that is used for drinking or food preparation. Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) has identified all drinking water outlets in schools that must be tested. WCPS will test all drinking fountains, classroom sinks, health room sinks, work room sinks, restroom sinks, ice making equipment, and kitchen sinks used for food preparation.

The Maryland law requires WCPS to test all drinking water outlets in schools that serve students in grades Pre-K-grade 5 and all other schools built before 1988 by July 1, 2018. Schools built after 1988 and serve grades 6-8 must be tested by July 1, 2019, and schools built after 1988 and serve grades 9-12 by July 1, 2020. Any water outlet that has a sample that is higher than 20 ppb lead, requires a remedial plan of action.

On March 16, 2018, samples were taken for 44 outlets at Sharpsburg Elementary. First draw sample results were received on March 20, 2018, with 11 hand washing sinks testing positive for elevated levels of lead. Regulation defines an elevated lead level to be greater than 20 parts per billion.

The media center office, professional workroom, boy's toilet room and the main office had elevated lead levels at sink outlets. Additionally, classrooms 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 had elevated levels at classroom sinks.

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Follow-up flush samples are required to be conducted within 5 school days after elevated results. On March 27, 2018, flush samples were drawn on the 11 outlets with elevated levels of lead. Flush sample results were received March 30, 2018, with elevated lead levels in 5 fixtures.

Classrooms 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 had elevated levels after the flush sample was drawn.

All drinking fountains at Sharpsburg Elementary had a non-detectable level of lead.

The remedial plan of action includes: permanently closing access or removing the outlet, repairing the outlet or service line, installing filters or automatic flushing devices, and/or providing bottled water.

Washington County Public Schools has posted signs at the outlets indicating they are for "Hand Washing Only" until the outlets can be replaced. After the outlets are replaced, another round of testing will be conducted to determine if the outlets can be used for drinking in the future.

The EPA has determined that lead in drinking water is a health concern at certain levels of exposure. Lead is found throughout the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, certain types of pottery (such as porcelain), pewter, and water. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body. Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells, and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children and pregnant women. Amounts of lead that will not hurt adults can slow down normal mental and physical development of growing bodies. In addition, a child at play often comes into contact with sources of lead contamination - like dirt and dust - that rarely affect an adult. It is important to wash children's hands and toys often, and to try to make sure they only put food in their mouths.

If you have any further questions, please contact:

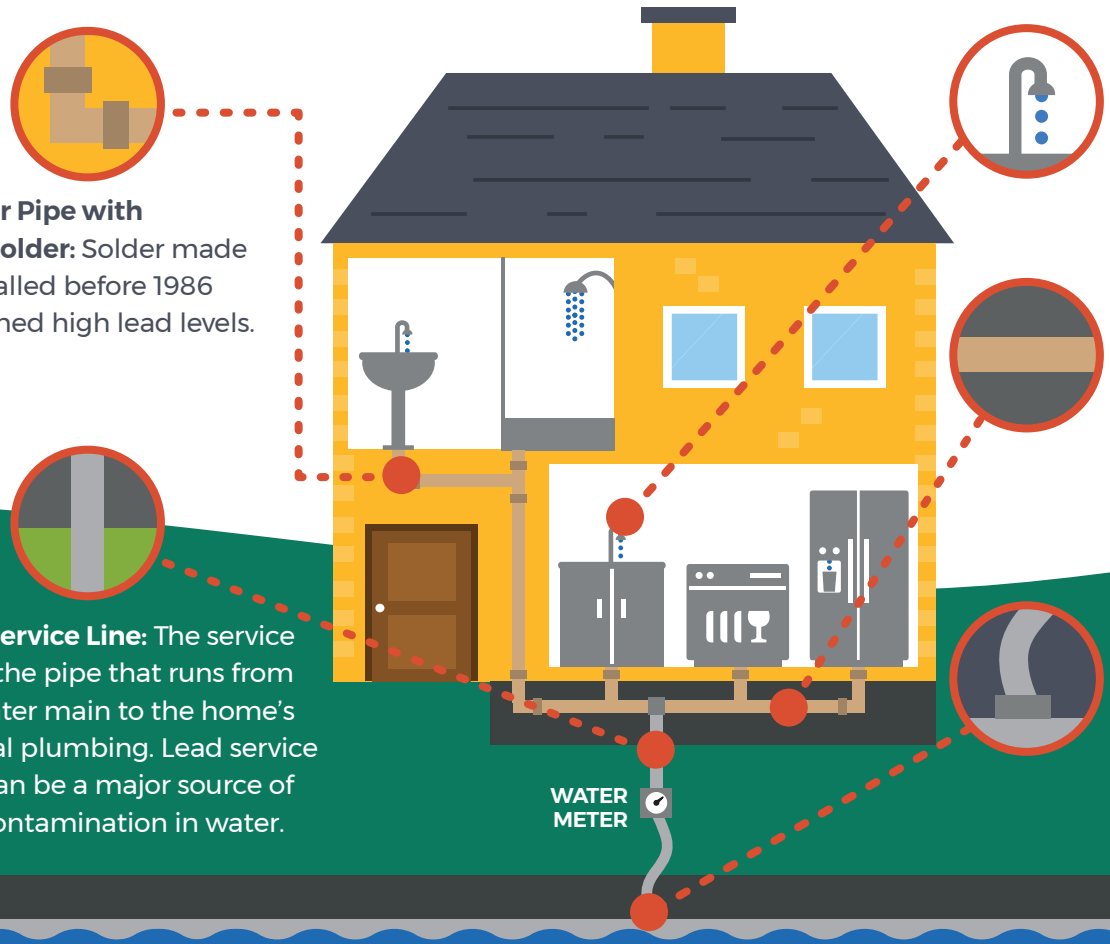
Mark Mills, Director of Maintenance and Operations **301-766-2978**

Matt Burton, Facilities Operations Manager **301-766-2864**

EPA

CONCERNED ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER?

Sources of **LEAD** in Drinking Water



Copper Pipe with Lead Solder: Solder made or installed before 1986 contained high lead levels.

Faucets: Fixtures inside your home may contain lead.

Galvanized Pipe: Lead particles can attach to the surface of galvanized pipes. Over time, the particles can enter your drinking water, causing elevated lead levels.

Lead Service Line: The service line is the pipe that runs from the water main to the home's internal plumbing. Lead service lines can be a major source of lead contamination in water.

Lead Goose Necks: Goose necks and pigtails are shorter pipes that connect the lead service line to the main.

Reduce Your Exposure To Lead

Use only cold water for drinking, cooking and making baby formula. *Boiling water does not remove lead from water.*

Regularly clean your faucet's screen (also known as an aerator).

Consider using a water filter certified to remove lead and know when it's time to replace the filter.

Before drinking, flush your pipes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes.

To find out for certain if you have lead in drinking water, **have your water tested.**

Replace Your Lead Service Line

Water systems are required to replace lead service lines if a water system cannot meet EPA's Lead Action Level through optimized corrosion control treatment.

Replacement of the lead service line is often the responsibility of both the utility and homeowner.

Homeowners can contact their water system to learn about how to remove the lead service line.

Identify Other Lead Sources In Your Home

Lead in homes can also come from sources other than water. If you live in a home built before 1978, you may want to have your paint tested for lead. **Consider contacting your doctor to have your children tested if you are concerned about lead exposure.**

For more information, visit: **epa.gov/safewater**