



St. Mary's Catholic School

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July, 2018

Dear Parents, Staff, and Teachers:

In compliance with the new Maryland state law, St. Mary's School recently had all water sources tested for lead content. The testing requirement was for all water outlets, not just drinking fountains.

Four sinks at SMS tested above acceptable levels (the action level is 20 parts per billion for lead in drinking water in school buildings). These bathroom sinks, one located in a bathroom downstairs, and three located upstairs in the faculty bathroom, have not been removed, and were **NOT sinks used for consumption**.

All other results in this lead testing show that the drinking water at SMS is completely safe and below the action level for lead in the drinking water.

In Peace,

Chris Buchleitner
Principal

Lead in Drinking Water – Public and Nonpublic Schools **IMPORTANT NOTICE: ELEVATED WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)** **St. Mary's School**

ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)

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 5, 2018, a total of 42 lead water samples were collected from St. Mary's School. Of these lead water samples, four sources that are NOT typically used for consumption 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 sample(s) collected at St. Mary's School were as follows:

35.7 parts per billion (ppb) **Basement Girl's Bathroom Sink B**

139 parts per billion (ppb) **2nd Floor Staff Lavatory Sink A**

441 parts per billion (ppb) **2nd Floor Staff Lavatory Sink C**

388 parts per billion (ppb) **2nd Floor Staff Lavatory Sink G**

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

- The outlets stated above that exceeded the action level are NOT typically used for consumption. Signs have been placed near these outlets to notify the children and staff that the outlets are to be used for hand washing only.

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 **the Principal** at **301-577-0031**. 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. 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.