

A NOTICE TO PARENTS, GUARDIANS and STAFF

Homer Elementary School

Lead Testing of School Drinking Water

January 3, 2024

The Homer Central School District is in the process of completing regularly scheduled testing of its drinking water in accordance with updated, more stringent New York State standards for Lead in Water. According to the law, all school districts and BOCES must conduct testing of school potable water sources in occupied buildings. When the law was updated in 2021, testing standards for public schools became some of the strictest in the country. Consequently, districts and BOCES are expecting to find some outlets with levels that require remediation.

Safe and healthy school environments can foster healthy and successful children. To protect public health, the Public Health Law and New York State Health Department (NYS DOH) regulations require that all public schools and boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) test lead levels in water from every outlet that is being used, or could potentially be used, for drinking or cooking. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 5 parts per billion (ppb), which is equal to 5 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$), the NYS DOH requires that the school take action to reduce the exposure to lead.

The district began its current round of testing in December 2024 and as part of updated state requirements, the district will be sending correspondence to families and community members and posting results [online](#) each time new test results are received.

Fixtures at Homer Elementary School were sampled on November 27, 2024. The chart below identifies fixtures marked for remediation. All other fixtures produced samples within acceptable levels. [Click here to view the complete test results for Homer Elementary School.](#)

Outlets that exceeded 5 ppb action limit		
Outlet Location	Fixture Type	Sample Results
Room 305	Sink	7.0 PPB
Room 215	Sink	9.6 PPB
Library	Sink	6.7 PPB
Kitchen	Dish Sink	85.5 PPB
Kitchen	Dish Sink	275 PPB
Kitchen	Convotherm Sprayer	34.2 PPB

What is “first draw” testing of school drinking water for lead?

The “on-again, off-again” nature of water use at most schools can raise lead levels in school drinking water. Water that remains in pipes overnight, over a weekend, or over vacation periods stays in contact with lead pipes or lead solder and, as a result, could contain higher levels of lead. This is why schools are required to collect a sample after the water has been sitting in the plumbing system for a certain period of time. This “first draw” sample is likely to show higher levels of lead for that outlet than what you would see if you sampled after using the water continuously. However, even if the first draw sample does not reflect what you would see with continuous usage, it is still important because it can identify outlets that have elevated lead levels.

What is being done in response to the results?

Homer Elementary School Remedial Action Plan for Outlets Exceeding 5 ppb Lead:

Outlet Location	Result (PPB)	Action taken
Room 305 Sink	7.0	Posted sign stating handwashing only. Clean and/or replace aerator and retest. If aerator does not result in passing results, faucet will be replaced. Room has a drinking fountain within acceptable levels.
Room 215 Sink	9.6	Unoccupied classroom. Posted sign stating handwashing only. Clean and/or replace aerator and retest. If aerator does not result in passing results, faucet will be replaced.
Room 200 Sink	6.7	Posted sign stating handwashing only. Clean and/or replace aerator and retest. If aerator does not result in passing results, faucet will be replaced.
Kitchen Wash Room Sink B	85.5	Outlets designated for dishwashing only may be excluded. Posted sign stating handwashing and dishwashing only. Not to be used for drinking, cooking, or food preparation.
Kitchen Wash Room Sink C	275	Outlets designated for dishwashing only may be excluded. Posted sign stating handwashing and dishwashing only. Not to be used for drinking, cooking, or food preparation.
Kitchen "Convotherm" Sprayer	34.2	Posted sign stating not to be used for cooking or food preparation. Inspect supply lines, replace as necessary, and retest.

What are the health effects of lead?

Lead is a metal that can harm children and adults when it gets into their bodies. Lead is a known neurotoxin, particularly harmful to the developing brain and nervous system of children under 6 years old. Lead can harm a young child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. Lead exposure during pregnancy may contribute to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. There are many sources of lead exposure in the environment, and it is important to reduce all lead exposure as much as possible. Water testing helps identify and correct possible sources of lead that contribute to exposure from drinking water.

What are the other sources of lead exposure?

Lead is a metal that has been used for centuries for many purposes, resulting in widespread distribution in the environment. Major sources of lead exposure include lead-based paint in older housing, and lead that built up over decades in soil and dust due to historical use of lead in gasoline, paint, and manufacturing. Lead can also be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, foods, plumbing materials, and cosmetics. Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies but drinking water could become a possible source of lead exposure if the building's plumbing contains lead. The primary source of lead exposure for most children with elevated blood-lead levels is lead-based paint.

Should your child be tested for lead?

The risk to an individual child from past exposure to elevated lead in drinking water depends on many factors, including but not limited to, a child's age, weight, amount of water consumed, and the amount of lead in the water. Children may also be exposed to other significant sources of lead including paint, soil, and dust. Since blood lead testing is the only way to determine a child's blood lead level, parents should discuss their child's health history with their child's physician to determine if blood lead testing is appropriate. Pregnant women or women of childbearing age should also consider discussing this matter with their physician.

Additional Resources

For more information regarding the testing program or sampling results, please contact Scott Cavellier, Assistant Director of Facilities, at (607) 749-1234, or go to our District's [Water Testing Webpage](#)

For information about lead in school drinking water, go to:

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/lead_testing_of_school_drinking_water.htm

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/LeadTestinginSchoolDrinkingWater.html>

For information about NYS DOH Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, go to:

<http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/lead>

For more information on blood lead testing and ways to reduce your child's risk of exposure to lead, see "What Your Child's Blood Lead Test Means":

<http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2526/> (English)

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/lead/education_materials/index.htm (available in ten languages).