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November 2, 2016

Dear Cherry Hill Public Schools Community,

Our school system is committed to protecting student, teacher and staff health and safety. As was discussed publicly in the July Board of Education Committee Meetings and at the August 9, 2016 Board of Education Work Session, the Cherry Hill School District in October began the process of testing all of our 19 schools' drinking water for lead to protect our community and be in compliance with the Department of Education regulations. To date, water has been tested at Harte, Johnson, Mann, Sharp, Stockton and Woodcrest Elementary Schools, as well as the Malberg Administration Building/Alternative High School.

In accordance with the NJ Department of Education regulations, the Cherry Hill School District will implement immediate remedial measures for any drinking water outlet with a result greater than the Lead Action Level of 15 µg/l (parts per billion [PPB]). This includes removing and capping the outlet unless it is determined the location must remain intact and useable for non-drinking purposes. In these cases, a "DO NOT DRINK – SAFE FOR HANDWASHING ONLY" sign will be posted.

Following [guidance provided by the Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) we are working on completing a limited plumbing profile for each of the buildings within the Cherry Hill School District. Through this effort, we have, to date, identified and tested all drinking water and food preparation outlets at Harte, Johnson, Mann, Sharp, Stockton, Woodcrest and Malberg. Of the 209 samples collected from the schools listed above, nine water outlets – at Harte, Johnson, Mann, Sharp and Woodcrest – tested above the Lead Action Level. A chart detailing the results of all testing samples to date can be found by clicking the link at the end of this letter.

Our remaining schools are scheduled for sampling over the next several weeks, with all sampling to be complete by December 31, 2016. Testing results of those samples will be made public as we receive the results.

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 6 years of age. 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. Exposure to high levels of lead during pregnancy contributes to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants.

In young children, lead exposure can lower IQ levels, affect hearing, reduce attention span and hurt school performance. 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, in that 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 in building plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass, and chrome-plated brass faucets. In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater 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 fairly high levels of lead.

Lead in Drinking Water

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

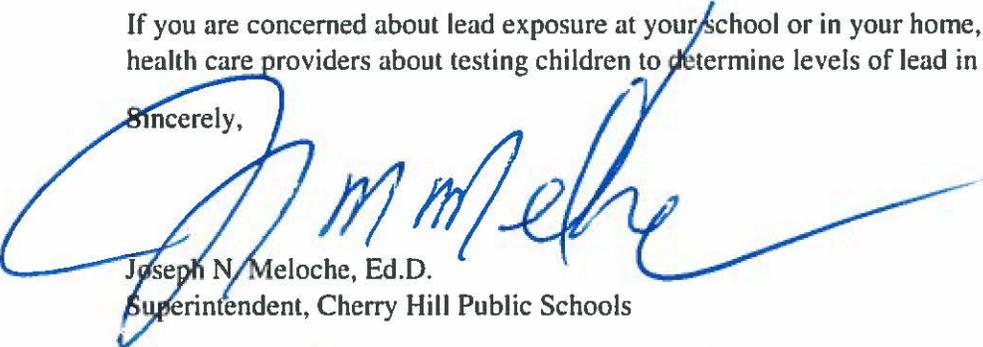
For More Information

A paper copy of the test results is 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 am and 4 pm. The test results are also available here on our web site by clicking the link at the end of this letter. For more information about water quality in our schools, contact Tom Carter, Director of Facilities at the Cherry Hill School District, at thcarter@chclc.org.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit the EPA's web site at www.epa.gov/lead, call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD, or contact your health care provider.

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

Sincerely,



Joseph N. Meloche, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Cherry Hill Public Schools

[Please click here for a chart detailing the results of the Cherry Hill Public Schools water tests to date.](#)