

## **Testing Lead Content in Drinking Water of School Facilities Policy 3510 February 28, 2017**

The Board of Education acknowledged its obligation to ensure that the lead content of drinking water in its school facilities meet established guidelines under applicable provincial and federal legislation, and report results annually to the Ministry of Education. Reasonable steps necessary to resolve lead levels that are outside established guidelines must be taken on any School District drinking water quality test results.

### **Rationale**

This policy provides minimum requirements for testing lead content in drinking water of school facilities, reporting the result, and mitigation strategies to eliminate or reduce risks to students and staff.

This policy specifically addresses lead content in drinking water. The Ministry expects school districts to mitigate other issues that affect the quality of water as prescribed under applicable provincial and federal legislation.

### **Guidelines**

All plumbing systems that provide drinking water in school facilities shall be tested for lead content where the:

1. Plumbing systems were installed before January 1, 1990.
2. School has any history of elevated lead levels.

### **Water Testing Requirements**

The School District is to work with the Regional Health Authority to determine a testing program for all School District facilities. The testing procedure and amount of samples taken at each facility shall be determined in collaboration with the Regional Health Authority, and be based on risk.

The School District must conduct lead content testing in drinking water if the facility is being regularly utilized by students and/or staff. The School District may also disable fountains and water systems to eliminate the risk of lead exposure. In this case, testing is no longer required.

The School District must complete lead content testing on all school facilities once every 3 years. Therefor a minimum of 1/3 (33%) of the School District facilities must be tested each year.

### **Mitigation Strategies**

If sample results reveal lead levels above the maximum allowable concentration of 0.010 mg/L as stated from the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality by Health Canada, the School District, in consultation with their Regional Health Authority must commence daily flushing immediately, or deactivate and place a “Not is Use” sign on the water source.

Mitigation solution may include:

1. Flushing regimes
  2. Deactivation of water sources and supplemental signage
  3. Installation of filtration systems
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4. Plumbing upgrades
5. Or other steps that result in reducing the exposure to acceptable levels

### **Communication and Reporting Requirements**

Should testing result in elevated levels of lead, the School District must immediately inform the Ministry of the issue.

The School District shall collaboratively work with their Regional Health Authority to communicate the results of testing lead content in drinking water with parents, students, and staff by describing the following:

- Rationale for testing lead in drinking water
- Identify partnerships with the Regional Health Authority in solutioning
- State results of sampling
- Identify mitigation strategies implemented or being considered by the Board
- Provide contact information for the School District and the Regional Health Authority for parents, students, and staff to request further information.

The School District must submit all of their testing results annually to the Ministry of Education by March 30<sup>th</sup>, using the “Report of Testing Lead Content in Drinking Water of School Facilities” spreadsheet.

Authority:

Drinking Water Protection Act  
Drinking Water Protection Regulation  
Public Health Act  
School Act