



BREWER SCHOOL DEPARTMENT Brewer, Maine 04412

March 7, 2017

RE: Safety Precautions and Water Testing

Dear Families,

I am writing to let you know that we recently tested a sample of water fountains and sinks at the Brewer Community School, the Brewer High School, and the Center Street building to ensure the safety of our water system. Water samples were collected from all school buildings and analyzed to determine whether those buildings had high levels of lead or copper under the guidelines established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The tests indicated no issues at the Brewer Community School, but did show a slightly elevated level of lead in a single drinking fountain in the High School gymnasium and a single water fountain at Center Street. A small number of sinks at the High School and Center Street also showed slightly elevated lead levels. As soon as we received these results on Friday, March 3, 2017, we immediately prohibited students and staff from using the affected fountains and sinks, and shut off the water supply where possible.

It is important for you to know that the water source does not exceed the EPA guidelines for lead. A likely cause of lead contamination is from older pipes that provide water to these locations. Once we have determined the underlying cause, we will work as quickly as possible to correct the issue, which may include installing filters or replacing equipment. Additional water samples from those fountains will be retested to confirm the fixes put in place are successful before reopening them for service. The results of these upcoming water tests will also be shared with our school community.

At this point, in order to make sure there is no question about student or staff safety, students and staff will not be allowed to use any untested water fountain or sink at the High School or Center Street building until it has passed a water safety test and we know the water is safe. In the meantime, we will be providing alternative water sources to students and staff for drinking. In the future, the BSD will continue yearly assessments of water quality and will notify families of the schools' water assessments if they exceed the EPA standards.

You can learn more about the national standards for water safety at schools at the EPA's website:
<https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/drinking-water-schools-and-childcare-facilities>

Additionally, I have attached a letter from the Brewer Water Department which provides an explanation of sources of lead in pipes and what individual homeowners and business owners can do. If you have any specific questions regarding lead in pipes or how to test for lead, please contact the Brewer Water Department at 989-4214.

As you know, student and staff safety are our highest priority. The amount of water consumed at these specific locations is not likely to affect your child. If you are concerned about your child's health, we recommend you contact your pediatrician. I am sending this information to keep you informed and alleviate any concerns you may have. I will keep you updated as we move forward, and please do not hesitate to call if you have questions.

Thank you,

Cheri Towle
Superintendent of Schools

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