

Lead in Drinking Water – Public and Nonpublic Schools

Updated in response to legislation effective as of June 1, 2021

IMPORTANT NOTICE: ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)

Immaculate Conception School

ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULTS

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 10/29/2021, fifty-four water samples were collected from Immaculate Conception School. Of these water samples, four had levels of lead exceeding the State's revised action level of 5 parts per billion (ppb) (*formerly 20 ppb; 5 ppb effective June 1, 2021*) for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The elevated lead results from the samples collected at Immaculate Conception School were as follows:

Parish Hall Lobby, Bathroom, Women's, Middle Sink, Ground Floor	41.0 ppb
Parish Hall Lobby, Bathroom, Men's, Middle Sink, Ground Floor	7.0 ppb
Middle School, Classroom, Art Room 307, Utility Sink, 3rd Floor	6.7 ppb
Middle School, Classroom, Science Room 301, Utility Sink, 3rd Floor	6.3 ppb

ACTION LEVEL (AL)

Effective June 1, 2021, the State's AL for lead in drinking water samples collected from outlets in school buildings has been lowered to 5 ppb. The AL is the concentration of lead which, if exceeded, triggers required remediation of drinking water outlets.

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 sources 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 workplace 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 four water sources that exceed the MDE Action Level were immediately taken out of service pending remedial action.

NEXT STEPS

Within one week, remedial actions were completed on all four sinks. The Parish Hall bathroom sinks were fitted with lead filters. The classroom utility sinks have all been flushed, and clearly marked "HAND WASH ONLY". All four sinks have been retested and are now in compliance with MDE safe drinking water regulations.

Follow Up Test Results:

Parish Hall Lobby, Bathroom, Women's, Middle Sink, Ground Floor	<1.0 ppb
Parish Hall Lobby, Bathroom, Men's, Middle Sink, Ground Floor	<1.0 ppb
Middle School, Classroom, Art Room 307, Utility Sink, 3rd Floor	3.8 ppb
Middle School, Classroom, Science Room 301, Utility Sink, 3rd Floor	5.0 ppb

SUMMARY

All Immaculate Conception School potable water sources including bottle fill stations, kitchen sinks and bathroom sinks are under the 5.0 ppb Action Level and fully comply with MDE safe drinking water guidelines. All classroom utility sinks have been marked “HAND WASH ONLY” and are not used for potable water in compliance with MDE guidelines.

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

For additional information, please contact Curt Russell, Facilities Manager, at 410-427-4702. 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.