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School Drinking Water Annual Notification and Recent Test Results

March 7, 2023

Dear Parents, Students, Staff, and Members of the School Community:

Lead Testing of School Drinking Water

As part of the state's efforts to protect the health of all children, a new law ([RCW 28A.210.410](#) and [RCW 43.70.830](#)) was enacted in 2021. This law addresses concerns about lead in school drinking water as part of a broader effort to reduce children's overall exposure to lead in the environment. Once the law was passed, the state legislature directed the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) to create protocols and procedures for testing school drinking water.

The law requires school drinking water to be tested every five years for lead in all public schools with buildings built or plumbing replaced before 2016. Testing for the presence and level of lead in drinking water must be conducted by the DOH or a school contractor before June 30, 2026. The Cashmere School District (School District) contacted the DOH in the Fall of 2022 to do this testing. The DOH recently sampled and tested the drinking water in our schools.

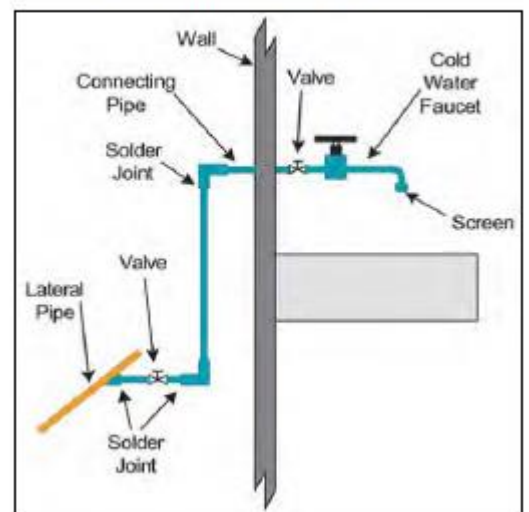
What We Have Learned

On **January 20 and 21, 2023**, DOH staff sampled 142 fixtures at Vale Elementary School, Cashmere Middle School, and Cashmere High School. This number of fixtures represents those that provide drinking water to students or are used to prepare food. On **Friday, February 24**, at approximately 6:00 pm, the School District received the DOH test results. The test results show seven water samples at Vale Elementary School (59 tested) had lead levels above five parts per billion (ppb), one water sample at Cashmere Middle School (46 tested) had lead levels above five ppb, and six water samples at Cashmere High School (37 tested) had lead levels above five ppb. Lead levels above five ppb require a school remediation action plan.

What We Are Doing

- Immediately after being notified of the DOH results, we took every fixture with elevated lead levels out of service.
- We immediately contacted the City of Cashmere, the schools' drinking water supplier. The City confirmed that its water source is tested regularly and meets all requirements for lead levels. This suggests that this is not a water "source" issue.
- We also quickly contacted Fulcrum Environmental Consulting (Fulcrum) for further testing.
- Fulcrum was on site **Sunday, February 26**, to conduct follow up testing starting at Vale Elementary School. The DOH Test and Fulcrum Test 1 (first draw) follow identical testing protocols. The cold-water sample is collected before any water is used to test "stagnant" water that may be present at the beginning of the day or in locations with infrequent use. Fulcrum Test 2 (second draw) and 3 (third draw) are collected sequentially and are for diagnostic purposes to help identify potential sources of lead. The additional water samples are collected in sequence immediately following Test 1.

Exhibit 5. Targeted Locations of Water in Plumbing for Cold Water Faucets



- On **Wednesday, March 1**, at approximately 4:30 pm, the School District received the Fulcrum test results for Vale Elementary School. All test results for Vale Elementary School are as follows:

Table 1: Summary of Vale Elementary Drinking Water Analytical Results

Fixture	DOH Test	Fulcrum Test #1	Fulcrum Test #2	Fulcrum Test #3	Comment
Vale Kitchen Sink	25 ppb	76.2 ppb	11.3 ppb	5.86 ppb	Hand washing only. Not for consumption or food preparation. Discontinued use pending follow up testing.
Vale Steam Kettle #1	71 ppb	9.54 ppb	19.9 ppb	11.7 ppb	Used 4 days during 2022-23 school year. Discontinued use pending follow up testing.
Vale Steam Kettle #2	119 ppb	15.6 ppb	5.57 ppb	4.23 ppb	Used 9 days during the 2022-23 school year. Discontinued use pending follow up testing.
Vale Kitchen Sprayer (Combo)	18 ppb	-	-	-	Discontinued use pending follow up testing.
Vale Kitchen Sink (Combo)	18 ppb	38.6 ppb	11.9 ppb	7.24 ppb	Discontinued use pending follow up testing.
Vale Bottle Filling Station	13 ppb	-	-	-	Was not in use.
Vale POD Sink	8 ppb	-	-	-	Staff dishwashing and hand washing only.
* The DOH Test and Fulcrum Test 1 follow identical testing protocols. The cold water sampled is drawn to test “stagnant” water. Fulcrum Test 2 and 3 are for diagnostic purposes to help identify potential sources of lead. *Levels that exceed 5 ppb, but less than 15 ppb, school districts are encouraged to discontinue use pending a remediation plan. *Levels that exceed 15 ppb, school districts are required to discontinue use pending implementation of a remediation plan.					

- On **Friday, March 3**, Fulcrum was on-site and conducted follow up testing for the Family and Consumer Science Sinks at Cashmere High School where a remediation action had been completed. These test results are pending.

Table 2: Summary of Cashmere Middle and High School Analytical Results

Fixture	DOH Test	Comment
CMS (Classroom Bottle Filler)	7 ppb	Discontinued use. Follow-up testing to be done
CHS (Kitchen Sink)	15 ppb	Discontinued use in 2018 following remodel. Not used for food prep or consumption
CHS (Locker Room Water Fountain)	10 ppb	Discontinued use.
CHS (Locker Room Water Fountain)	10 ppb	Discontinued use.
CHS (Locker Room Water Fountain)	10 ppb	Discontinued use.
CHS (Family and Consumer Sciences Sink)	9 ppb	Newly installed sink. Discontinued use pending follow up testing.
CHS (Family and Consumer Sciences Sink)	8 ppb	Newly installed sink. Discontinued use pending follow up testing.
*Levels that exceed 5 ppb, but less than 15 ppb, school districts are encouraged to discontinue use pending a remediation plan. *Levels that exceed 15 ppb, school districts are required to discontinue use pending implementation of a remediation plan.		

- Cashmere School District is working with DOH, Fulcrum, Engineers, and a plumbing contractor to evaluate piping and other pre-fixture components that may contribute to elevated lead levels.
- Cashmere School District is working closely with DOH and the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a permanent school remediation action plan.

Why Lead Is A Concern

Young children are especially vulnerable to lead exposure. Their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults and are more sensitive to its harmful effects. Even from very low levels of exposure to lead, children may experience lower IQ levels, reduced attention span, hyperactivity, or other harmful health effects that can impact learning, development, and behavior. Children are exposed to lead from various environmental sources, including water, dust from old lead paint, soil, and the clothing of parents who work in certain industries. Since each source contributes to a child’s overall lead exposure, it is important to reduce exposure from every source as much as possible. If you are concerned that your child has been exposed to lead for any reason, ask your healthcare provider about having them screened for lead.

Visit the [DOH Prevent Lead Poisoning](#), [EPA Learn About Lead](#), and [CDC Health Effects of Lead Exposure](#) websites to learn more about how to prevent lead exposure for children and what to do if you believe your child may have been exposed to lead.

School Remediation Action Plan

Schools must develop an action plan for any outlets (such as faucets or drinking fountains) with high lead levels. We promptly started developing a plan for the School District, following Environmental Protection Agency guidance known as the [EPA 3Ts For Reducing Lead In Drinking Water](#), and in consultation with the DOH. As additional testing is completed, the plan will be modified. The final action plan must be adopted within six months of getting the lead test results. We will make the plan available for your feedback before that date.

Where To Learn More

Water testing results from the Washington State Department of Health and Fulcrum Environmental Consulting referenced above are available at the School District office and on our website <https://www.cashmere.wednet.edu>. Water testing results will also be available at the [DOH Lead Test Results From Drinking Water In Schools](#) and [DOH Lead In School Drinking Water Dashboard](#) websites in the near future.

Additional information and action plans will be provided throughout this process. In the meantime, if you have questions, do not hesitate to contact me or contact principals for building specific information.

Sincerely,

Glenn Johnson
Superintendent
(509) 782-3355

cc: Washington State Department of Health
Chelan-Douglas Health District