

March 19, 2024

Dear Okemos Families,

Okemos Public Schools remain dedicated to the health and safety of our students and staff, as well as to clear and transparent communication. Last week, Cornell Elementary's water was tested for lead and other contaminants as part of our district wide testing plan.

Most of the 15 samples were undetectable for lead, and none of the samples tested at levels higher than the district's action level of 5 parts per billion – although the goal will always be no detectable lead. The results can be found on our Environmental Testing [website](#).

The Environmental Resources Group, our environmental testing partners, sampled water from eight classrooms, three bottle fillers, the cafeteria, and the health room sink.

ERG is planning to finalize collecting water samples in all of the schools this week. We prioritized the youngest students and the oldest buildings. Structures constructed before 1987 have a greater likelihood of lead-based solder in pipes.

The district started testing water in our schools after concerns about discolored water at Okemos Public Montessori in October and similar concerns at Chippewa Middle School recently. Test results showed elevated levels of lead in the water in part of both buildings, most recently in the auditorium wing at Chippewa.

Water was also tested at Edgewood earlier this year because of the young age of the students. All tests showed lead was undetected in that building. Results for all of our environmental testing can be found on our [website](#).

Due to the water results at two buildings, out of an abundance of caution, we are asking our staff to direct students to drink water only from filtered bottle filling stations in all district buildings until all district water testing is completed. These bottle fillers filter out lead and other contaminants. Signs are posted showing where students should fill their water bottles, and where they should not drink out of faucets.

The water is safe for washing hands, cleaning fruits and vegetables, and washing dishes, as long as they are dried with a clean towel.

John J. Hood

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4406 N. Okemos Rd., Okemos, Michigan 48864

Phone: 517-706-5007 Fax: 517-349-6235

Together...educating with excellence, inspiring each learner for life."

Okemos is working to implement Michigan's Clean Water Drinking Act, known as the "Filter First Legislation," ahead of the state's 2025-26 deadline. The state is finalizing guidance on the legislation, which will include a Drinking Water Management Plan template, guidance for filters, and training.

Our commitment to health and safety includes:

- implementing Michigan's Clean Water Drinking Act, known as the "Filter First Legislation" ahead of the state's 2025-26 deadline,
- a continued commitment to providing filtered water stations in each school,
- implementing an annual water testing schedule district-wide, starting with our structures built before 1987 when lead solder was still used to connect copper pipes,
- increased frequency of water testing at any of our buildings undergoing construction, with a focus on those built prior to 1987,
- email of building test results to families,
- building a portal to report testing results on the district website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Hood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "H".

John J. Hood, Superintendent, Okemos Public Schools

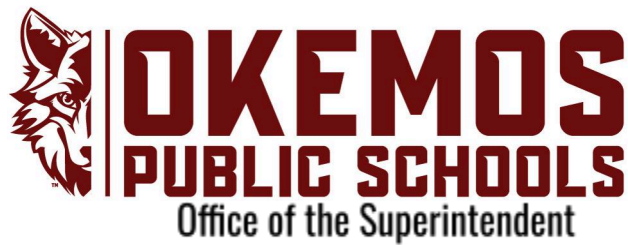
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Most of the 15 samples were undetectable for lead, and none of the samples tested at levels higher than the district's action level of 5 parts per billion – although the goal will always be no detectable lead. The results can be found in the chart below and on our Environmental Testing [website](#).

The Environmental Resources Group, our environmental testing partners, sampled water from eight classrooms, three bottle fillers, the cafeteria, and the health room sink.

ERG is planning to finalize testing all of the schools in the district this week. We prioritized the youngest students and the oldest buildings to be tested first. Structures constructed before 1987 have a greater likelihood of lead-based solder in pipes.

Cornell Elementary Water Testing Results			
Heath Room sink (Main office) - 1st draw	2 ppb	Classroom: Dykemon - 2nd draw	Not detected
Heath Room sink (Main office) - 2nd draw	2 ppb	Classroom: Fesko	Not detected
Cafeteria middle sink	3 ppb	Classroom: Pignataro	Not detected
Bottle filler across from Staff Break Room	Not detected	Classroom: Nahat	2 ppb
Bottle filler near Hixson's classroom	Not detected	Classroom: Petersburg	2 ppb
Bottler filler between restrooms across from the library	Not detected	Classroom: Malkus	Not detected
Classroom: Hixson	Not detected	Classroom: Coy	1 ppb
Classroom: Dykemon - 1st draw	Not detected		

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