

March 11, 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. After concerns about discolored water at Okemos Public Montessori in October and similar concerns at Chippewa Middle School recently, the district had water in those buildings tested for contaminants. 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 will be 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.

Our environmental testing group ERG will test the water in all district school buildings starting with the oldest buildings and the youngest students. Results should be available a few weeks after testing. We are working to finalize the testing schedule (and will communicate once it's set) and hope this can occur in the next month. Buildings constructed before 1987 have a greater likelihood of lead-based solder in pipes.

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

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guidance on the legislation, which will be released in late April, 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](#).

If you would like for your student to be tested for lead exposure, you can contact our partners at the Ingham County Health Department or your pediatrician's office. The blood test is accurate only 28 days after exposure to lead, according to the ICHD. If you have additional questions, contact the ICHD Lead Testing Team at 517-887-4479.

We understand concerns from our families and staff, and if you have health-related questions, our health team is ready to assist you at 517-706-5008.

The Okemos Public Schools will continue to take all necessary steps to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment that prioritizes the well-being of our students, staff and community. If you have additional questions please contact our Operations Department at 517-706-5039.

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

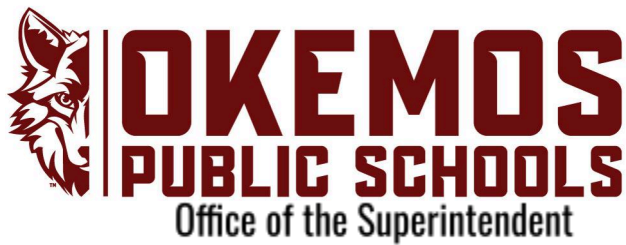
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Dear Chippewa Families,

Okemos Public Schools remain dedicated to the health and safety of our students and staff, as well as to clear and transparent communication. After concerns about discolored water in the auditorium and gymnasium areas at Chippewa Middle School, the district had water from seven faucets in those areas tested for contaminants in February. All four test results from the auditorium's bathroom sinks had elevated levels of lead in the report the district received on Friday.

The test results from the girl's auditorium restroom faucets showed levels of lead at 14 and 37 parts-per-billion (ppb). The test results from the boy's auditorium restroom faucets showed levels of lead at 8 ppb. Our district limit for action is 5 ppb. The results can be found on our Environmental Testing [website](#).

Our environmental testing group ERG also tested three bathroom faucets in the men's and women's restrooms outside of the gym, and those results show that lead was undetected.

Out of an abundance of caution, we are asking our staff to direct students to drink water only from filtered bottle filling stations throughout the building until further testing is completed. These bottle fillers filter out lead and other contaminants. Signs will be posted showing where students should fill their water bottles, and where they should not drink out of faucets.

At Chippewa, the water fountains without filters have been turned off since students returned to school after Covid in March 2021. The school's water was last tested in 2016, and all test results showed levels below the district's 5 ppb limit.

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The district will follow ERG's recommendations to clean faucet aerators and run water for 10 minutes each school day to flush the pipes. The water is safe for washing hands, cleaning fruits and vegetables, and washing dishes.

ERG will test additional spaces at Chippewa this week, and we will share the results with you as soon as the data is available. We are working to finalize the testing schedule (and will communicate once it's set) and hope this can occur prior to spring break. Buildings constructed before 1987 have a greater likelihood of lead-based solder in pipes.

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 be released in late April, which will include a Drinking Water Management Plan template, guidance for filters, and training.

Our commitment to health and safety includes:

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We understand concerns from our families and staff, not only those currently at Chippewa, but also alumni of the school, and others in our district. If you have health-related questions, our health team is ready to assist you at 517-706-5008.

The Okemos Public Schools will continue to take all necessary steps to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment that prioritizes the well-being of our students, staff and community. If you have additional questions please contact our Operations Department at 517-706-5039.

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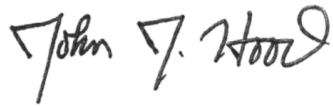
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