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# Reading Public Schools

*Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow*

August 26, 2019

Dear Reading Public School Staff and Community:

The Town of Reading Water Department and the Reading Public Schools have been, and continue to be, very proactive in their testing and remediation program for lead and copper found in our school's drinking water. Since 2016, Reading's Lead & Copper School Water Testing Program has followed all recommendations and guidelines put forth by both the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These guidelines are stated in the MassDEP's & EPA's Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA) that was established to reduce and remediate lead and copper in the drinking water of schools and childcare facilities. Furthermore; Reading went an additional step beyond LCCA Regulations and lowered the Town Action Level (AL) of any lead found in our school's drinking water from 15 ug/L (Microgram per Liter) or ppb (Parts Per Billion) to 12 ug/L or ppb. This additional precaution was done by the Town to further its concern and protection for welfare of Reading Students, Teachers and Staff that all consume Reading School water.

In Reading's Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA) Plan, all Town Public drinking water sources in all Town schools, buildings and parks have been identified, mapped, cataloged then tested for both lead and copper in their water offered. All possible Town or School drinking water sources were identified including all water fountains (both bubbler and water cooler style), kitchen sinks & kettles, classroom combination sinks & fountains, home economics room sinks, teachers' lounge sinks, employee cafe sinks, nurse's office sinks, sinks in special education classrooms, and any other fixtures known or thought to be used for water consumption. If any testing result is found in any water source that exceeds Reading's high Water Quality Action Level Standard, swift action is taken to isolate, investigate, address, remediate, retest then move to fully resolve that concern. The Town is confident that all offered water from any water source in any of Reading's Public Schools, Buildings or Parks provides tested and certified safe high quality drinking water that is free from any Lead or Copper Action Limit violation.

Reading's Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA) Plan is regarded as a state model plan and Reading was actually awarded the MassDEP STAR L Award in 2018. This award is given to select Public Water Systems (PWS) and School Departments who take action to reduce lead in school drinking water and do so with extremely encouraging results. The Award is given to both the PWS and the School District as they both diligently work together in tandem testing, addressing and maintaining their ongoing efforts. Below is the link for Reading's LCCA Award:

<https://www.mass.gov/news/massdep-announces-winners-of-2018-public-water-system-awards>

In 2019, the Town completed 100% Full Mapping and Testing of all of Reading's Schools with the final two last schools wrapped up, Reading Memorial High School (RMHS) and Parker Middle School (Parker), as part of Reading's Pre-Determined LCCA Schedule listed in the Plan. At RMHS, we found two High Lead Level First Draw Samples above or near the threshold set by the Town; a hand washing sink and the ice machine that were both located within the school kitchen. At Parker, we found three High Lead Level First Draw Samples above or near the threshold set by the Town; a hand washing sink in the nurse's office, and a

cooking kettle and another hand washing sink that were both located as well in the school kitchen. All other samples taken at RMHS and Parker, over 400 total Samples, tested well below the recommended action levels for both lead and copper with the major portion of Samples showing levels of Non Detect. All of the components in any of the faucets that tested high at both Schools were replaced, and then a second set of samples were then taken and tested again. All of these faucets except two tested well below the set Action Level from the second round of testing after the plumbing replacements. The two remaining High Lead Level sinks were next clearly identified, one at RMHS and one at Coolidge. These faucets are not for food prep and not predominantly used for drinking water. These two faucets are now clearly labeled: "Hand Washing Only". Both faucets no longer pose any issues with offered drinking water to our Students, Faculty or Staff.

The Reading Public Schools and the Town of Reading take these LCCA testing results very seriously and move to immediately safeguard the health of Reading Students, Faculty and Staff if any issue is ever found from our ongoing annual LCCA testing program. Since 2016 and to present, the Killam Elementary School has been the only Reading School, Building or Facility that has needed a more extensive mitigation protocol instituted in order to address the results found in the drinking water. As communicated previously in 2016, at Killam, as a precautionary measure after all remediation efforts from the final LCCA results, we removed from service all drinking fountains within the classrooms and corridors. All the faucets within the entire school were clearly labeled "Hand Washing Only". The students and staff can safely use these sinks for hand washing purposes, but not for drinking water or food cooking purposes. The Killam School is outfitted with many safe clean bottled drinking water stations located throughout the building. At the beginning of the School start and throughout the year, Killam Teachers review with Students and Staff Killam's drinking water and sink hand washing only water school policy that Reading has put in place through MassDEP recommendations. These actions have made a very effective safe mitigation solution for the Killam School. Additionally, throughout the entire Reading Schools system, we have found that a 30 second flush of almost any water source has brought the detectable lead or copper testing result to its very minimum result or more commonly the 30 Second Flush result was seen as Non Detectable. For this reason, and again for further precautionary measures, the Reading School Department has instituted and put into practice safety protocols for all Cafeteria Staff to flush all kitchen water faucets for 30 seconds prior to drawing any water used for cooking purposes.

Reading's LCCA Action Plan is an active ongoing program that continues each year with annual school water Lead and Copper testing through Reading's Determined LCCA School Sampling Schedule that is thorough, effective and set forth within the plan itself. Additionally, if any School has any new plumbing work done within the school on any drinkable water source, that source is retested and confirmed to have no Lead or Copper Action Level Violation.

We have great resources here in Reading with our many very proactive Departments each working together to assure that the safety and health concerns for our Students, Faculty and Staff are kept up to the highest level. The Town of Reading and the Reading School Department are proud to offer and confirm safe, clean, high quality tested drinking water in all of our Reading Schools, Buildings and Facilities today and in the future.

Along with other information regarding Lead and Copper in Drinking Water, Reading Water Quality Testing, MWRA, MassDEP and EPA links, please find Readings LCCA Plan, Source Mapping and Testing Results all online and available from the Water Quality Page of the Town of Reading's Website listed below:

<https://www.readingma.gov/water-division/pages/water-qualitysupply>

If there are any further questions or concerns regarding Reading's LCCA Plan, feel free to contact Erik Mysliwy, Reading's Water Quality & DPW Safety Administrator via phone, 781-942-9092 x1215 or through email at [emysliwy@ci.reading.ma.us](mailto:emysliwy@ci.reading.ma.us) or contact the Reading Public Schools Administration Offices at 781-944-5800 or through email at: <https://www.reading.k12.ma.us/about-us/contact-us/>

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