



Huron-Superior Catholic

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES ASSESSMENT OF DRINKING WATER IN BOARD FACILITIES

Background

Ontario Regulation 243/07, Schools, Private Schools, and Child Care Centres under the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002, states that all owners and operators of Schools, Private Schools, and Child Care Centres must flush their drinking water fixtures regularly and sample their water annually to test for lead.

Furthermore, Schools, Private Schools, and Child Care Centres with their own drinking water source* (i.e. a groundwater well, surface water system, or cistern) that do not receive drinking water from a municipal drinking water system are considered a “designated facility” and subject to both the O. Reg. 243/07 and Ontario Regulation 170/03, Drinking Water Systems.

Ontario drinking water quality standards allow a certain amount of lead in drinking water. However, the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks maintains that “Children up to six years old are more sensitive to the effects of lead because they are still developing and their small bodies can absorb it more easily than adults. Even small amounts of lead can be harmful to young children, infants, and pregnant women.”

Drinking water samples that exceed 10 µg/L of lead is considered to be an exceedance.

It is likely that the drinking water in the facilities owned by the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board will, at some point, contain lead, since it comes into contact with piping, older fixtures, and/or lead soldering.

**Note: St. Kateri is the only facility with its own drinking water source.*

Process for Arranging Drinking Water Assessments

- The Board procures the services of an Environmental Consultant (hereafter referred to as the Consultant) or equivalent for a period of time (e.g. from three to five years).
- The Health & Safety Officer will coordinate all testing with the Consultant.
- The Consultant conducts drinking water assessments (DWAs) on an annual basis in each school building and in every board building where young children attend regularly (e.g., St. Kateri Outdoor Learning Centre).

Responsibilities of the Board

- To sample all schools' fixtures must be sampled at least once over a three-year period in compliance with Ontario's Safe Drinking Water Act.
- To ensure the consultant assesses one third of each school's fixtures annually, between the months of May 1 and October 31.
- To collect at least one set of samples from a drinking water fixture and have them tested for lead within 30 days of opening at newly opened schools and child care facilities.
- All fixtures used for drinking water are to be sampled. Fixtures that are not used for drinking (e.g. custodial mop sinks) do not require a sample.
- The Board will install signage on all fixtures that will indicate whether the source is acceptable for drinking, food and/or drink preparation, or solely for handwashing.
- When sampling a fixture, the Consultant will gather two types of samples at each fixture, a flushed sample, and a standing sample.
- The addition of any new drinking water fixtures must first have a valid standing and flushed sample taken prior to being placed into service.
- Notify applicable parties of any exceedances.
- Post results of annual testing to the Board website.

Sample Types

When a drinking water fixture is tested, two types of samples are taken, referred to as a "standing sample", and a "flushed sample."

- A flushed sample is drinking water that has been flushed for five minutes and then left for approximately thirty minutes.
- A standing sample is drinking water that has been sitting stagnant in water supply lines for a period of six or more hours.

Lead Exceedances

Exceedance on Flushed Sample

An exceedance in a flushed sample results in removing the fixture from service until the exceedance drops below the acceptable threshold of 10 µg/L. This may be remedied in a variety of ways, such as re-testing of the fixture, installation of a NSF certified filter, and/or the

replacement of the fixture itself.

Should none of these measures lower the level of lead in the drinking water from that fixture, the Health & Safety Officer will consult with Plant Services to discuss removing the fixture permanently from use.

Exceedance on Standing Sample

An exceedance in a standing sample does not result in removing the fixture from service. Retesting of fixtures is also not required for lead exceedances for standing samples.

When a Flushed Sample Results in a Lead Exceedance

The Consultant will:

- Immediately notify the Board's Health & Safety Officer about any exceedances in the flushed samples.
- Contact the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks, Ministry of Education, and the Medical Officer of Health at the local Public Health Unit for which the jurisdiction of the school resides, to advise them of the exceedance.

The Health & Safety Officer will:

- Arrange for the fixture to be removed from service and work with Plant Services to plan corrective action(s).
- Contact the school Principal and Vice-Principal, the Superintendent responsible for the school, the Plant Services Department, the Supervisor of Caretakers, and the Director of Education with particulars about the exceedance.
- Communicate the need for Carestaff to flush all drinking water fixture(s) for five minutes first thing in the morning on a daily basis.
- Contact the Communications Officer to post the notice of exceedance on the Board's website, in compliance with Ontario's Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Instruct the Principal or Vice-Principal to make parents/guardians aware of the exceedance via written communication home. (See Appendix A).

Plant Services will:

- Coordinate corrective actions(s) with the Health & Safety Officer.

When a Standing Sample Results in a Lead Exceedance

The Consultant will:

- Immediately notify the Board's Health & Safety Officer about any exceedances in the standing samples.
- Contact the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ministry of Education, and the Medical Officer of Health at the local Public Health Unit for which the jurisdiction of the school resides, to advise them of the exceedance.

The Health & Safety Officer will:

- Contact the school Principal and Vice-Principal, the Superintendent responsible for the school, the Plant Services Department, the Supervisor of Caretakers, and the Director of Education with particulars about the exceedance.
- Communicate the need for Carestaff to flush the affected fixture(s) first thing in the morning on a daily basis and complete applicable record keeping.
- Contact the Communications Officer to post the notice of exceedance on the Board's website, in compliance with Ontario's Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Instruct the Principal or Vice-Principal to make parents/guardians aware of the exceedance via written communication home. (See Appendix B).

Plant Services will:

- Procure and change at the necessary intervals, any "NSF" certified filters that have been installed on a plumbing fixture that has had an exceedance remedied by installation of a filter.

Resolving Exceedances

When a drinking water fixture that has previously exceeded the acceptable threshold of 10 µg/L has been re-tested with results that passes the acceptable threshold, or passes with certain conditions, the following steps will be taken:

The Consultant will:

- Immediately notify the Board's Health & Safety Officer with the results of the samples.
- Contact the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ministry of Education, and the Medical Officer of Health at the local Public Health Unit for which the jurisdiction of the school resides, to advise them of the resolution.

The Health & Safety Officer will:

- Contact the school Principal and Vice-Principal, the Superintendent responsible for the school, the Plant Services Department, the Supervisor of Caretakers, and the Director of Education and advise of them of the resolution and any accompanying maintenance procedures.
- Communicate the need for Carestaff to perform any necessary maintenance procedures. (e.g. flushing daily, reporting filter change indicators, etc.)
- Share any required scheduled maintenance procedures with the Plant Services Department. (e.g. scheduling filter changes)
- Contact the Communications Officer to post a notice of resolution on the Board's website.
- Instruct the Principal or Vice-Principal make parents/guardians aware of the exceedance via written communication home. (See Appendix C).