



Dr. Thomas J. Douglas, Superintendent
One Raider Lane • Horseheads, NY 14845
(607) 739-5601, x4201 • Fax (607) 795-2405
www.horseheadsdistrict.com

October 14, 2016

Dear Horseheads Central School District Parents/Guardians:

On September 6, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law new guidelines regarding water testing for lead in schools. Now, all water sources in every school building must be tested every five years. The Horseheads Central School District has always maintained a strict adherence to federal guidelines in regard to water testing. In regard to the new law, Horseheads took immediate action to comply with the legislation in every elementary school building by the deadline of September 30, 2016. Secondary schools must be tested by October 31, 2016. We are currently in the process of complying with the testing schedule in our middle and high schools.

Prior to the new law, districts have followed the national and state EPA standard of 20 parts of lead per billion parts of water. This new law now sets the standard at 15 parts of lead per billion parts water, making New York State's standard one of the strictest in the country. This means that if the concentration of lead in the water is more than 15 parts per billion parts of water, the district must take action and correct the water source.

Results of the elementary tests, submitted at the end of September, are now beginning to come back to the district. The first results showed slightly elevated levels of lead in some fixtures at Gardner Road Elementary School. The district expects results for the remaining elementary schools in the next few weeks/months. We believe that with this stricter standard, we will see slightly elevated results in our other schools. We will not know any information until each specific building's test is returned to the district. This will take some time since every school in the state is currently undergoing the same testing process, creating a backlog and timing issue for efficient testing.

We want to reassure you that the district is following all New York State Health Department guidelines for both notification and correction of any identified concerns. All sources of elevated levels at any of our schools will be identified, marked, and taken out of service in anticipation of immediate repair or replacement of any identified fixture. The district will also communicate all results as they become available via our website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com in order to keep a transparent review of water testing results for our district.

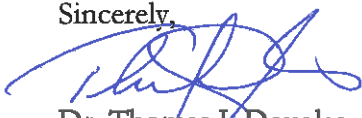
Please note that in 2006, prior to water testing becoming mandated, the district conducted extensive EPA water testing in all buildings to make sure that all water sources met the required standard. Any fixture that did not meet the testing standard was immediately repaired or replaced in the best interest of safety. We wish to reassure you that the district and its operations and maintenance staff take this new standard seriously and will move rapidly in seeking remedies for any concerned areas.

Once any identified fixtures have been replaced or repaired, the district will retest them and keep them out of use until the results from the NYS Department of Health are returned to the district confirming the correction of the initial test. We will do everything within our power to expedite this second water test and get it returned to the district as soon as possible.

In addition, in any building that is affected, alternate drinking water sources will be provided for any area that has a fixture taken out of service.

If your child's building is affected in any way, you will receive direct communication from that building's principal. Please be assured that your child is safe. Our wish is to be transparent about water testing and safety at our schools. If you have further questions, please contact your school principal. Thank you for your understanding as we address this new legislation and continue to protect our children's safety.

Sincerely,



Dr. Thomas J. Douglas
Superintendent of Schools