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October 3, 2016

Dear TST Community,

In April, I sent you a correspondence informing you that due to concerns that had come to light in our local schools regarding lead in drinking water, TST BOCES voluntarily decided in mid-March to sample potable water sources on our campus. A total of eighty-nine (89) sites that could be used as primary drinking water sources were sampled at that time. As I reported to you, four (4) of those samples came back with lead levels exceeding the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) or action level of 15 ppb (parts per billion). As a result, these fixtures were made to be inaccessible and signage posted that they not be used. These fixtures are located as follows: one in D122 Animal Science Classroom sink, one in Smith Building Kitchen E013 SW sink and one in each of the Smith Building Circle of Courage Room E027 Kitchenette sinks North and South.

In mid-April, with guidance from the Tompkins County Health Department (TCHD), we resampled the four locations that had tested elevated in mid-March. Of those samples, two came back with levels below the NYSDOH action level (D122 Animal Science Classroom sink and Smith Building Kitchen E013 SW sink) and two were above the action level (Smith Building Circle of Courage Room E027 Kitchenette sinks North and South).

In late May, based on these results, the TCHD informed us that the D122 Animal Science Classroom sink could be returned to use with a daily flushing plan and recommended retesting within 90 days. The TCHD also advised that the Smith Building Kitchen E013 SW sink could be returned to normal use. Based on their age and condition, TST BOCES decided to replace the fixtures located in the E027 Kitchenettes in May.

In late August, a 90-day follow-up sample of the D122 Animal Science Classroom sink was taken as recommended by the TCHD along with a follow-up sample at the Smith Building Kitchen E013 SW sink. Samples were also taken from the new fixtures that were installed in the Smith Building Circle of Courage E027 Kitchenette sinks North and South. The laboratory results for those samples were received in late September. Of the samples, the North Kitchenette sink in the Smith Building Circle of Courage E027, exceeded the action level. This sink has been out of service since the initial sampling and will remain that way indefinitely. No students or staff have access to this sink.

Together we learn, lead, support and serve

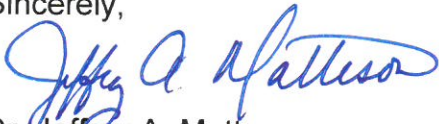
As part of our voluntary testing, we discovered two fixtures that were not tested initially so we did have them tested as part of the follow-up sampling. One of these sinks is the Small Island sink in the Smith Building Kitchen E013. The other is a sink located in one of the small rooms located inside of the Animal Science Classroom D122 that is used to provide water for animals. Both of these sinks tested below the action level.

On a related note, recent state legislation has gone into effect that now require that schools in New York State test all potential drinking water sources in their school buildings for lead. For elementary schools serving grades K-5, this testing had to be completed by the end of September 2016. For school buildings serving grades 6-12, the testing must be completed by the end of October 2016.

As a result of our initial voluntary sampling, TST BOCES was already largely in compliance with the new testing requirements. As our initial sampling focused on primary drinking water sources, we did not sample other potential sources such as bathroom sinks. So, late last week, samples were collected from these other potential sources in Smith Building and I Building. Samples were also taken from the ice making machines located in the Horizon Café in B Building and in the Smith Building Kitchen E013. Additional sampling will be conducted of other potential sources that have not yet been sampled in B, C and D Buildings in October to ensure compliance with the new testing requirements.

Once results are received for the additional sampling that was conducted last week and for the samples that will be taken in October, I will share those results with you. In the meantime, should you have any questions related to any of the sampling or the process that we have followed, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jeffrey A. Matteson
District Superintendent and CEO
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES