



October 21, 2016

Dear Thomas J. Watson School Community:

The Union-Endicott School District is committed to protecting our student, teacher, and staff health. This correspondence is to inform you that we have conducted the required steps needed to comply with a bill recently passed by the New York State Legislature, asking all school districts to test drinking water outlets for lead contamination. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 15 parts per billion (ppb), the legislation requires taking action to reduce the lead.

Why Test School Drinking Water for Lead? Exposure to lead through drinking water can cause health problems. Lead is most dangerous for pregnant women, infants, and children under 6 years old. Exposure to high levels of lead during pregnancy contributes to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. In young children, lead exposure can lower IQ levels, affect hearing, reduce attention span, and hurt school performance. At *very* high levels, lead can even cause brain damage.

Is TJW's Drinking Water Safe? Yes, our schools' water is safe. Union-Endicott tested our drinking water for lead. Of the 82 water samples we tested, 11 samples showed lead levels above the 15 ppb mark. Here is a summary of our findings:

- **Room 14 (sink and drinking fountain)** - These areas were immediately shut down. We are in the process of replacing the faucet and fountain, and we will retest the area in the near future.
- **Custodian's Closet, Room 1-4.2 and Custodian's Closet Room 32.2** – Signs were immediately placed on these sinks indicating that the water was not potable and should not be used for drinking. Since these areas are in a location where students cannot access the water, they do not need further remediation.
- **Room 15 (drinking fountain)** – This area was immediately shut down. We are in the process of replacing the drinking fountain, and we will retest the area in the near future.
- **Room 35 (drinking fountain)** – This area was immediately shut down. We are in the process of replacing the drinking fountain, and we will retest the area in the near future.
- **Room 1-3.2 (Boys Bathroom) and Room 1-3.1 (Girls Bathroom)** - The left-hand sink located inside the boy's bathroom area near the cafeteria was affected, as well as the right-hand sink located inside the girl's bathroom near the cafeteria. A sign was immediately placed on both sinks indicating that the water from the faucets was not potable, and should not be used for drinking. We are in the process of replacing the faucets and will retest the area again.
- **Room 39 (Kitchen, handwashing sink)** – A sign was immediately placed on the sink indicating that the water from the faucet was not potable, and should not be used for drinking. It's noted that this sink is used for handwashing purposes and not for food preparation. We are in the process of replacing the faucet and will retest the area again.
- **Room 1 (bathroom sink)** – A sign was immediately placed on the sink indicating that the water from the faucet was not potable, and should not be used for drinking. We are in the process of replacing the faucet and will retest the area again.
- **Principal's Sink** – A sign was immediately placed on this sink indicating that the water was not potable and should not be used for drinking. Since this area is in a location where students cannot access the water, there is no need further remediation.

How Can I Learn More? You can see a copy of our water testing results at the Union-Endicott District Office which is open Monday to Friday from (8:00 am to 4:30 pm). Additional information can be found on our website at www.uek12.org. For more information about water quality in our schools, please contact Gerald Abbey, Director of Facilities, at 607-757-2196. For information about water quality and sampling for lead at home, contact your local water supplier or Broome County Health Department at 607-778-2847.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Suzanne E. McLeod". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Suzanne McLeod
Superintendent of Schools