



Building Bright Futures

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jeffco Public Schools Testing Water for Lead

GOLDEN, CO, June 16, 2016 – A few weeks ago, elevated lead levels were found in water at an Arvada Headstart building that was previously owned by Jeffco Public Schools (JPS). Fortunately, tests showed the Headstart building in Arvada did not have elevated lead levels in any of the faucets the students used as drinking sources. However, this situation and the fact that 69% of JPS facilities are 29-68 years old, prompted the JPS environmental services department to be proactive.

“Many of our buildings are dated and have fixtures and pipes that do not meet today’s standards and are starting to deteriorate,” explained JPS Executive Director of Facilities Tim Reed.

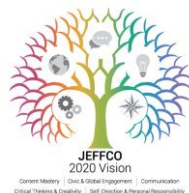
Though random testing has been the norm and there is no requirement to test drinking water for lead in schools, the environmental staff developed a plan to test all JPS facilities in the next year to ensure student and staff health and safety. Staff began taking water samples from any possible drinking source at schools two weeks ago, starting with older facilities.

So far, test results from two schools show elevated lead levels at several drinking water sources. Slater Elementary School in Lakewood had eight water sources in the building with elevated levels; Edgewater Elementary School had two water sources with elevated lead levels. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggests any reading over 15 parts per billion (ppb) needs remediation.

As this is a potential health risk, action was taken immediately. The water sources have been shut down and JPS will work with community partners to address the issue. Water companies, Jefferson County Public Health, local municipalities, and others have been informed and they have offered resources to help mitigate the lead presence before school starts in August.

“The initial plan was to work our way through all our schools in the next year,” said Kim Brogan, JPS Director of Environmental Services. “Now that we have results showing elevated lead levels in some drinking sources, we will accelerate our testing and work towards testing all drinking water sources and fixing any issues before school starts in August. If remediation is not completed by then, the drinking sources with elevated levels will be disconnected and not used. Bottled water will be provided if needed.”

Families of students that have attended the two schools have been notified of the test results. They were informed that Jefferson County Public Health recommends that anyone who has questions or concerns regarding a child’s exposure to lead should contact their primary doctor to set up an appointment for a lead





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exposure screening. If unable to schedule an appointment with a primary health care provider, they may call Jefferson County Public Health (303-232-6301) for resources in our community.

In addition, and because lead exposure can come from many environmental sources, parents were reminded that providing children with healthy foods high in calcium, iron, and vitamin C may help keep lead out of the body. Calcium is in milk, yogurt, cheese, and green, leafy vegetables like spinach. Iron is in lean red meats, beans, peanut butter, and cereals. Vitamin C can be found in oranges, green and red peppers, and juice.

As test results are collected, we will post any findings that show levels above the EPA 15ppb guideline on www.jeffcopschools.org. Any families that might be affected will be contacted directly.

About Jeffco Public Schools

Jeffco Public Schools has been providing educational excellence for more than 60 years. Approximately nine percent of all the K-12 students in Colorado attend a Jeffco school. Our mission is to provide a quality education that prepares all children for a successful future. The district serves over 86,000 students at 154 schools on 168 campuses. Find [Jeffco Public Schools](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

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