



January 7, 2022

Absecon Community,

As you are aware, our school district is committed to protecting student, teacher, and staff health. To protect our community and be in compliance with the Department of Education triennial regulations, the Absecon Public School District tested our schools' drinking water for lead. Due to the fact that our Marsh Bubblers (water fountains) have remained unused and shut down for the duration of the pandemic (March of 2020), as one of the district's many mitigation efforts to negate the spread of Covid-19, our current testing has indicated small traces of lead in the water of our unused fountains. The results of this test are directly aligned to the lack of routine flushing that would naturally occur if the system were to remain on and used daily. This is supported through the absence of lead at the Attales Middle School, where the water fountains and connected bottle refill areas were subsequently turned on back in September of 2021, allowing students to refill their water bottles or use disposable cups to obtain a drink of water.

In accordance with the Department of Education regulations, the Marsh Elementary School will implement immediate remedial measures for any drinking water outlet with a result greater than the action level of 15.5 µg/l (parts per billion [ppb]). This includes keeping off the outlet unless it is determined the location must remain on for non-drinking purposes. In these cases, a "DO NOT DRINK – SAFE FOR HANDWASHING ONLY" sign will be posted, replacement of the bubbler and bubbler piping, as well as the addition of a filtration system to each of the above level areas. The identified areas will then be resampled, and the bubblers will be permanently turned back on throughout the Marsh School and students will be given disposable cups as they currently are at the Attales Middle School.

Results of our testing following instructions given in technical guidance developed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, we completed a plumbing profile for both of the buildings within The Absecon Public Schools. Through this effort, on November 26, 2021 (with the report received by Epic Environmental on January 5, 2022), we identified and tested areas of drinking water and food preparation outlets including, but not limited to: classroom water fountains, water coolers, sinks in nurse's office, faculty break room, and locations in the kitchens used for food preparation. Areas such as bathrooms, custodial, art rooms, and science rooms/labs were not sampled, as these areas are not expected nor designed to be used for water consumption. Of many tested areas, all but 8 tested below the lead action level established by the US Environmental Protection Agency for lead in drinking water (15.5 µg/l [ppb]). The table below identifies the drinking water outlets that tested above the 15.5 µg/l for lead, the actual lead level, and what temporary remedial action Absecon Public Schools has taken to reduce the levels of lead at these locations.

## Marsh Elementary School

SAMPLE LOCATION	FIRST DRAW SAMPLE RESULT	FLUSH SAMPLE RESULT	SHORT TERM RESPONSE
Bubbler – Room 510	18.2 ppb	ND	Taken out of service
Bubbler – Room 505	459 ppb	32.4 ppb	Taken out of service
Bubbler – Room 403	44.6 ppb	2.29 ppb	Taken out of service
Bubbler – Room 405	19.5 ppb	ND	Taken out of service
Bubbler – Room 402	17.9 ppb	1.61 ppb	Taken out of service
Bubbler – Room 303	15.9 ppb	1.58 ppb	Taken out of service
Bubbler – Room 207	23.6 ppb	1.70 ppb	Taken out of service

*\*All of Marsh's bubblers/Water fountains were taken out of service (March of 2020) and have remained off through the current date.\**

All of the Attales Middle School bubblers in use came back as None Detected (ND) or within the allowable limits. The bubbler in room 708 (an old porcelain water fountain retired years ago but not yet removed) had a first draw of 20.3 PPB, Flush result of 2.01, and it will also remain out of service and will be removed.

### General Information:

#### Health Effects of Lead

High levels of lead in drinking water can cause health problems. Lead is most dangerous for pregnant women, infants, and children under 6 years of age. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. 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. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults.

#### How Lead Enters our Water

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like groundwater, rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, remaining stagnant from non-use within a pipe, or wearing away of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and in building plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass, and chrome-plated brass faucets. In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials. However, even the lead in plumbing materials meeting these new requirements is subject to corrosion. When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may

dissolve into the drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning may contain fairly high levels of lead.

### Lead in Drinking Water

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of children under the age of 6. EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20% or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

### For More Information

A copy of the test results is available in our central office for inspection by the public, including students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents, and can be viewed between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and are also available on our website at [www.AbseconSchools.org](http://www.AbseconSchools.org). For more information about water quality in our building please contact Mr. Brian Mills, Director of Buildings & Grounds, at 609-641-5375 X 1014 at the Absecon Public School District.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead), call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or contact your healthcare provider.

Sincerely,

Brian Mills, CEFM  
Director of Buildings & Grounds  
Absecon Public School District