



Pelham Elementary School District

Superintendent of Schools
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September 22, 2016

Dear Pelham Community:

The Town of Amherst and the Pelham Schools opted to participate in a voluntary program organized by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to test for lead and copper in schools due to the health impacts these metals can have on children and staff members. We took this proactive step (along with 179 of the 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth) because we believed it was in the best interest of our students and staff to ensure the health and safety of all in our community.

During testing that occurred at Pelham School on September 9, 2016, 29 faucets and sinks were evaluated for lead and copper levels. We were notified today that out of those 29, two bubblers and one faucet tested for lead at levels above the state and federally defined relevant action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) on “first draw” samples. Those that tested above the level were the bubbler and faucet in room 27 and the outdoor bubbler. All three responded positively to flushing, yielding “flush samples,” (which is testing completed after running the water for 30 seconds) below the action level. Town and School staff are investigating the cause of the lead and are working to resolve the issue. Lead is not believed to be in the primary water source at Pelham because of the aggregate results tests which indicates good piping and good source water. None of the samples tested above the action level for copper on initial or flush samples.

The water outlets that tested fine will no longer be flushed in the morning as had been our practice since the start of school this year. Flushing will continue on the outdoor bubbler and the fixtures in room 27 will be taken out of service since they are not typically used by staff or students. Until the issue is resolved, we will continue to share information as the source of the problem is investigated and further testing is completed.

To find out more information, please see this [FAQ document](#) produced by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Sincerely,

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