



**SOUTH KINGSTOWN SCHOOL DEPARTMENT**  
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Dear Matunuck School Parents/Guardians and Faculty/Staff,

**UPDATE regarding actions taken at Matunuck School**

In 2016, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed a law requiring the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) to test drinking water in schools for lead. Our school voluntarily submitted three drinking water samples. All water samples were tested by a state-certified lab. We are working with the Rhode Island Department of Health and the University of Rhode Island School Drinking Water Lead Project.

According to the RI Department of Health, the most common cause of a child becoming sick from lead is exposure to lead-based paint and paint dust found in a home environment. It is much less likely for a child to become sick from exposure to water in a school environment from a faucet or a water fountain. The data we have collected from water samples in our school helps us to keep our children as safe as possible by working with RIDOH to follow the recommended guidance.

As a reminder, here were the results of the three drinking water samples from Matunuck School (referenced in my letter of March 17, 2017):

Faucet or drinking fountain location	Lead (parts per billion, or ppb)	What We Are Doing? Immediate Action
MES kitchen sink faucet	98	Replace faucet aerators, replace the faucet & implement more frequent cleaning schedule of aerators.

**What Do The Test Results Mean?**

- Any sample that had a result of higher than 15 ppb is above the "action level" of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Our school is following advice from the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) to help fix this.
- Any sample that had a result between 1 and 15 ppb is below the "action level" of the EPA. There are still things we can do to help get rid of lead in the drinking water. We are following RIDOH's advice.
- Any sample that had a result of less than 1 ppb is below the "detection level" for lead. We are following RIDOH's advice to help keep lead out of the drinking water at the school.

In any area where results are higher than 15 ppb, we shut water off immediately and brought in bottled water. The water will only be turned back on in that area when the water quality tests show below 15 ppb.

We requested that the RIDOH retest after our immediate actions stated above and here are the retest results:

Faucet or drinking fountain location	Lead (parts per billion, or ppb)	What We Are Doing? Immediate Action
MES kitchen sink 1 <sup>st</sup> draw	61.0	Completely replace faucet, consultation with water quality engineers and based on their recommendation perhaps replace pipes from the kitchen sink to the ceiling (or more) and then retest RIDOH
MES kitchen sink 1 minute flush	1.9	
MES kitchen sink 5 minute flush	1.4	

The water will not be turned back on in this area until there is another retest and confirmation from RIDOH that the water quality tests show below 15 ppb.

**ACTIONS TAKEN since April 24, 2017**

**Out of an abundance of caution, as we await the retests from the Department of Health:**

**Immediate action taken:**

- Working in cooperation with URI and DOH, we tested every drinking water source in the building.
- If the results come back above 15 ppb, the water will be shut off in that area and we will use bottled water and/or trusted sources (i.e. the water fountains and sinks already tested).
- Completely replaced kitchen sink faucet.

**Long-term action:**

- **Consultation with SUEZ United Water Rhode Island (the agency with which the Town contracts to deliver public drinking water to Matunuck School and families) to determine long-term action plan, which may include completely replacing pipes from the kitchen sink to the ceiling (or further).**
- **Consultation with water quality expert.**

If you would like more information about lead in drinking water, visit these websites:

- Department of Health: <http://www.health.ri.gov/water/about/lead/> or 401-222-5960
- URI's Cooperative Extension:
  - o <http://web.uri.edu/nemo/lead-in-water>

**If you would like to talk to someone from the School Department about the test results, please call Maryanne Crawford, CFO at 401-360-1324 or email [mcrawford@sksd-ri.net](mailto:mcrawford@sksd-ri.net).**

Sincerely,



Kristen Stringfellow, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools