



September 15, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As you may be aware, there are new regulations in Ontario that require school and child care centres to complete lead testing on fixtures used to provide drinking water and/or prepare food or drink for children under the age of 18. This is an important strategy that has been established to help ensure that schools are not exposing children to lead through any of the plumbing within their facilities.

This means that the Northeastern Catholic District School Board will be completing the necessary testing and clearly marking which water fixtures can be used for drinking water in our schools. This is a standard procedure and is not meant to cause alarm or concern. Our students and families will soon see signs posted in our schools, clearly marking what fixtures have been tested and can be used to drink or prepare food. We are also very pleased to share that we have installed water bottle filling stations in each of our schools. This makes drinking water available to all students and staff, who are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles to school to stay hydrated throughout the day.

We will find information below about this matter, that comes directly from the Ministry of the Environment.

Should you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your School Principal or our Board Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tricia Weltz".

Tricia Stefanic Weltz
Director of Education

Ontario Regulation 243/07

(Schools, Private Schools and Child Care Centres)

Communications for Changes Effective July 1, 2017

Article

The following article is for use in child care centre and school communications (e.g., newsletters, websites, and letters to parents). It is intended to help inform parents about enhanced testing for lead as a result of updates to *Ontario Regulation 243/07*.

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

Ontario is continuing to protect children's health with new regulation changes aimed at improving drinking water testing in child care centres and schools to minimize children's exposure to lead.

New amendments to *Ontario Regulation 243/07* that take effect July 1, 2017 will now require lead testing within these facilities for all fixtures used to provide drinking water and/or prepare food or drink for children under 18.

Studies¹ show that lead levels in drinking water from plumbing can vary substantially between individual taps or fountains. Only by testing each drinking water fixture can child care centres and schools be sure that they are not exposing children to lead through any of the plumbing within their facilities.

Since 2007, the Ontario government has been requiring child care centres and schools to flush the plumbing in their facilities and to test their drinking water for lead. Flushing has been shown to reduce lead levels in water at a tap or fountain.

Ontario Regulation 243/07 also requires testing to measure the presence of lead in drinking water against the provincial drinking water quality standard of 10 micrograms per litre, based on a national guideline set by Health Canada.

For more information about flushing and sampling for lead in child care centres and schools, visit www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater or call the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change's Public Information Centre at 1-800-565-4923.

¹ World Health Organization: Lead Poisoning and Blood.
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs379/en/>