



Q: Is lead testing required in school districts?

A: Yes. On September 6, 2016 Governor Cuomo [signed a law](#) requiring all schools to conduct water testing to determine the presence of lead in drinking water.

Q: What is an acceptable level of lead?

A: Lead in water is measured in parts per billion (ppb). 15 ppb is the “action level” established by the new state regulations.

Q: How is the test conducted?

A: Following the guidelines established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) testing was conducted by Taconic Hills staff. 250 milliliter samples were collected from drinking water fixtures, water fountains, laboratory sinks, hose connections, and ice machines. The samples were first draw samples which is defined by water that has not moved through the system for a minimum of 8 hours but not more than 18 hours. We collected the first water that came out of the tap immediately after opening the valve. The samples were then sent to a lab certified under the Department of Health’s Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP) for analysis.

Q: What are the results of the district’s water tests?

A: All results will be posted [here](#) as they come in.

Q: What is the district’s action plan to address these levels?

A: Water outlets that are used for handwashing purposes or laboratory purposes have been clearly labeled with signage that indicates the tap is a **non-potable water source** and not for human consumption. Two water outlets in the High School kitchen were replaced immediately and will be retested prior to use.

Q: Was drinking water tested before the new law?

A: In many school Districts drinking water was not tested prior to the new law. At Taconic Hills, we have our own wells and do not rely on a municipal water supply. Therefore we are required to conduct a variety of water tests as outlined by the NYS Department of Health Part V of the Sanitary Code which includes lead and copper testing every 3 years. Results of the most recent



test can be found [here](#). We also test for bacteria and other organic and inorganic compounds. All test results are reported to the local DOH.

Q: Are schools required to test for lead in the future?

A: Schools will need to conduct water testing again in 2020 and every five years thereafter, or sooner if required by the state Commissioner of Health.

Q: How does lead enter the water?

A: 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, 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 lead solder containing greater than 0.2 percent lead and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials. However, even 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 which means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning may contain fairly high levels of lead.

Q: Can lead be removed from water by boiling it?

A: No, boiling water does not remove traces of lead.

Q: If I am concerned that my child may have been exposed to elevated levels of lead, what should I do?

A: According to the EPA, lead in drinking water is rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning. However, parents who are concerned may wish to discuss this with their family physician.

Q: Should I be concerned about possible lead in my drinking water (or water used for cooking) at home?

A: Prior to 1986, there were no regulations pertaining to lead in plumbing fixtures, so therefore, a possibility for the presence of lead may exist. If you are concerned about your drinking water at home, there are tests available.



Q: What if I have more questions?

If you have health concerns, it is always best to consult your family's physician.

For more information about lead in drinking water:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - [Basic Information About Lead in Drinking Water](#)

NYS Department of Health - [Get Ahead of Lead! Get the Lead Out of Drinking Water](#)

Q: How can I find out more about the testing results?

A: We are continually updating our [website](#) with information as it is coming in. If you have specific questions about the testing process, you can contact the Columbia County Department of Health at (518) 828-3358 or contact Nicholas Smith at Taconic Hills at (518) 325-2881.

If you are interested in technical information, please visit the following website:

<https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/testing-schools-and-child-care-centers-leaddrinking-water>