

## ***Wahluke School District Testing Drinking Water***

**May 19, 2023 up dated June 8, 2023**

Dear parents of Wahluke School District,

As of 2021, a new Washington state law ([RCW 28A.210.410](#) and [43.70.830](#)) requires school drinking water is tested for lead in all K-12 public schools. Recently the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) sampled and tested the drinking water in our District Schools.

### **What We've Learned**

In March, DOH staff sampled **all fixtures** in our school district (*6 schools total*). This number of fixtures represents every fixture that provides drinking water to students or is used to prepare food. The testing was done prior to the school day before students entered the building. Results show 3 water samples at Mattawa Elementary and 1 water sample at Morris Schott Elementary had lead levels above 5 parts per billion (ppb).

### **What We're Doing**

- After being notified of the results, our Maintenance and Facility Department created an action plan to replace each fixture.
- The District's Maintenance and Facility Department has replaced the 4 out of 4 water faucets. The remaining replacement will be done immediately when the new faucet arrives.

### **Why Lead is a Concern**

Children are exposed to lead from a variety of sources in their environments. Exposure sources include – dust from old, deteriorating lead paint, contaminated soil, take-home exposures from parents who work in certain industries, and many other sources. Each of these contributes to the amount of lead in the bodies of children.

It's important to reduce exposure from every source as much as possible. Children six years old and younger are the most susceptible to the effects of lead. Their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults, and their brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead. Even at very low levels of exposure to lead, children may experience lower IQ levels, reduced attention span, hyperactivity, poor classroom performance, or other harmful physical and behavioral effects.

### **Where to Learn More**

Water testing results are available at the district office and on our website [www.wahluke.net](http://www.wahluke.net) - <https://www.wahluke.net/article/1129461>. For more information about water quality in our schools, please contact Jerardo Puentes Director of Maintenance & Facilities at WSD, at (509) 932-4565 Ex: 3060. If you are concerned that your child has been exposed to lead for any reason, ask your healthcare provider about having them screened for lead.

Sincerely,

**Andy Harlow**

*Superintendent of Wahluke School District*