



Mercer County School District #404

District Office: 1002 SW 6th Street • Aledo, Illinois 61231
Phone: 309-582-2238 • Fax: 309-582-7428 • www.mercerschools.org

December 22, 2017

Dear Parents and Staff:

Mercer County School District #404 is diligent in ensuring safe and healthy learning facilities for our students. Part of ensuring a healthy learning environment is to make sure our water sources are clean and safe for consumption.

On January 16, 2017, Senate Bill 0550 was signed into law which requires all public and private schools occupied by students in preschool through fifth grade to test for lead in water sources used for drinking and cooking. All school buildings built before January 1, 1987 were required to be tested before the end of 2017. In our District, four of the five buildings met that criteria. Buildings built between January 2, 1987 and January 1, 2000 require testing by December 31, 2018. However, to ensure student and staff safety, Mercer County Schools tested required sources in all district facilities.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set an "action level" for lead in water at 15 parts per billion (ppb). Any water fixtures in our buildings showing lead levels above 15 (ppb) have already been taken out of service. Illinois Law now follows more stringent guidelines, and thus requires districts to notify parents if lead in water is at or above 5 (ppb). The District recently received test results for schools as required by the legislation and results for all other facilities as well. Test results at one site showed levels exceeding 5 (ppb).

Mercer County School District #404 will be following the Illinois Department of Public Health's guidelines to address the results. In a pro-active and health-minded approach, the District is taking or has taken the following action:

- Shutting down all effected water fountains in schools until remediation. Some fountains will be completely removed.
- Implement a daily flushing protocol for other sinks and water from these faucets will only be used to wash dishes and hands. According to the U.S. EPA, washing hands and even bathing or showering should be safe for children and adults, even if the water contains lead over the U.S. EPA action level. Human skin does not absorb lead in water.

Mercer County High
1500 S. College Ave.
Aledo, IL 61231
309-582-2223
Fax: 309-582-5920

Mercer County Junior High
203 N. Washington
Joy, IL 61260
309-584-4174
Fax: 309-584-4257

Mercer County Intermediate
1002 SW 6th St.
Aledo, IL 61231
309-582-2441
Fax: 309-582-2440

Apollo Elementary
801 SW 9th St.
Aledo, IL 61231
309-582-5350
Fax: 309-582-3457

New Boston Elementary
301 Jefferson St.
New Boston, IL 61272
309-587-8141
Fax: 309-587-3349

The chart shown in Appendix A lists the specific locations that tested above the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and EPA guidelines. The District is quickly remediating the situation through flushing pipes, replacing fixtures or taking fixtures out of service and is remediating all fixtures yielding a lead level above 5 (ppb). Once the work is complete, water samples will be drawn to re-test at those fixture locations to ensure they meet guidelines for appropriate lead levels.

Water testing results were based on two collected samples. The first collection, or "first draw", is a sample of water collected after each source was unused for at least eight (8) hours but not more than eighteen (18) hours. The second collection, or "second draw", is a sample of water collected after 30 seconds of flushing. Results are in the chart attached.

The areas of concern have been taken out of service completely until remediation is complete. The remaining water fixtures in these schools that are not listed in the chart have been tested and are clean and safe sources for drinking and washing.

In closing, I want to emphasize the District is striving to ensure both buildings have clean safe drinking water. If you have any questions, please contact us at 309-582-2238.

Sincerely,



Scott Petrie, Superintendent
Mercer County School District #404

Appendix A

School	Location	1 st Draw (ppb)	2 nd Draw (ppb)	Action Taken
Mercer County Junior High	Ag Building Fountain 2	6.37	103	Taken Out of Service
Mercer County Junior High	Kitchen Wash Sink	5.38	5.41	Flush Daily 10 Minutes Before Use