

NEWS 744-7

Failing the Test

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS DID NOT DISCLOSE EXTENSIVE LEAD TESTING FROM 2010 TO 2012.

BY RACHEL MONAHAN
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Portland Public Schools officials failed to disclose test results that showed unsafe amounts of lead in the water at dozens of district school buildings from 2010 to 2012.

Last week, Portlanders learned that the district found elevated levels of lead at two schools in March, but failed to disclose this information for nearly two months.

In the past few days, *WW* has learned and confirmed that PPS did extensive tests districtwide from 2010 to 2012 at 90 buildings, finding elevated levels of lead in the water at 47 of them, including Jefferson and Cleveland high schools and Ainsworth Elementary School. In some cases, the levels were higher than those found at Creston and Rose City Park, the elementary schools that were named last week.

This highly charged finding comes from a printout *WW* received from a district database of all water testing from 2001 through February 2015. The printout shows that 47 structures—schools, office buildings and others—tested for levels of lead that are above the federal standard of 15 parts per billion.

As extraordinary as these findings are, *WW* could not find anyone at PPS who knew the testing took place, or the results, prior to learning of them from *WW* on Friday, May 27. Nor is it clear what, if anything, was done in response to the test results.

Superintendent Carole Smith, who has led the school district since 2007; PPS chief operating officer Tony Magliano; and five members of the School Board all told *WW* that the 2010-2012 tests were news to them. Andy Fridley, the district's environmental director, declined to answer questions.

On Friday, May 27, *WW* emailed the test results to district officials at 3:47 pm. Officials did not respond until Tuesday morning.

But that evening, four hours after they received the test results, the district abruptly announced it was shutting off drinking water at all PPS schools for the rest of the school year and providing bottled water instead. At the time, local media assumed it was just a precautionary measure stemming from the findings at Creston and Rose City Park, not because of test results showing problems in other schools.

The district denies there was a connection.

"No, it was a precautionary move," says district spokeswoman Christine Miles.

Smith, reached by phone early Tuesday, said

she knew nothing about any lead test results from 2010 to 2012, even though she was superintendent at the time.

"Was I aware of it? No," Smith says.

Now, Smith wants "a third-party investigation" that she says she hopes will identify "lapses in judgment, protocol and communication."

Gwen Sullivan, president of the Portland Association of Teachers, says teachers were never told of the results from 2010 to 2012.

"It's shocking, and it's scary not only as a parent but because of all the teachers in the buildings all the time," she tells *WW*.

School Board member Mike Rosen, who, as former manager for the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, is familiar with water testing, reviewed the documents provided to *WW*.

"It appears based on a preliminary review of a portion of data from as recently as five years ago, there may have been reason for the district to suspect that further investigation of lead in drinking water was needed," Rosen says. "The need for an objective, thorough, and speedy investigation is, as the superintendent has said, urgent and a high priority."

School Board Chairman Tom Koehler, who also said the results were news to him, is also calling for a "thorough examination by an outside entity" of how PPS handles lead testing.

"We don't know the answers to those questions, and we want to know them as soon as we can," he says. "That's unacceptable, and we need to get to the bottom of this."

The Oregonian first reported last week that tests in March at Creston and Rose City Park schools found levels of lead above the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "action level" of 15 parts per billion.

PPS belatedly turned off the water and began preparations to replace fixtures and retest them.

On Friday, May 27, Smith acknowledged she had failed to communicate this information for two months.

Now, Smith must face the charge that the district learned of problems at many, many more schools at least four years ago—even though officials are claiming in essence that while the testing was done, no one knew it.

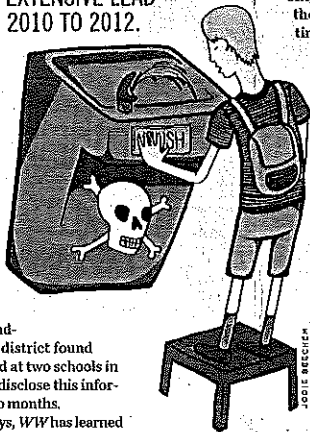
District COO Magliano says he is now reviewing the data *WW* provided him.

"I don't have a specific answer at this time," Magliano says.

The newly uncovered results show elevated lead levels at a number of buildings, including Kelly Elementary. On Jan. 16, 2012, a bubbler in the music room in a portable showed a level of 174 parts per billion. At George Middle School, Room 303 showed a reading of 100 ppb on March 31, 2012.

Not of all the buildings with high levels of lead serve children. At one administrative building, called in documents "the Rice site," the lead level hit 1,700 parts per billion.

In Flint, Mich., by comparison, 10 percent of the households had water at or above 27 ppb, **WV**



JOIE REICHER

its schools and pay its bills. It needs to make major changes and take responsibility for its actions before we can believe that it considers the safety of our children more important than its own image.

CHRIS COWELL
Northeast Portland

already announced, PPS needs to create a long-term plan for ongoing water testing, along with clear consequences if that testing doesn't happen. It should issue an apology that's more substantial than the mention of "regret" we've gotten so far. It needs to figure out who made the decisions, leading to this debacle. I don't see how those people or the people overseeing them can reasonably keep their jobs.

PPS revealed this information on the afternoon before a three-day weekend. Maybe that's coincidental, but the timing feels dishonest and cowardly. It smacks of spin and suggests they are trying to deflect instead of communicate. PPS has a lot of work to do to restore the trust of the families who attend

Lead in Portland school water

Regarding "Information on lead-tainted school water filters slowly" (May 28): I'm very upset about the unfolding Portland Public Schools lead scandal. I don't know how much to attribute to incompetence and how much to deliberate deceit. Either way, PPS has lost my confidence in its ability to keep our children safe.

A school district's primary responsibility is to ensure the safety of its students. While it can't be expected to prevent every playground bruise, it can be expected to prevent poisoning through the water supply. There's no conceivable excuse for what has happened.

in addition to the remediation steps

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Smith to open inquiry of staff, lead in water

By Casey Parks
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Portland Public Schools Superintendent Carole Smith said Tuesday she'll be "potentially putting one or more" district employees on administrative leave as the district examines its response to test results showing lead in water at two schools.

Smith, speaking to reporters before a special school board meet-

ing, said she'll open a "personnel investigation." She also said she learned of the results, from tests conducted in March, last Wednesday.

By then faucets and drinking fountains at the two schools, Creston and Rose City Park, had been repaired or closed off.

"Where did we have gaps in either judgment, protocols or com-

See Water, A5



ABOVE | Portland Public Schools Superintendent Carole Smith speaks during a special school board meeting Tuesday night at Creston School, where students were allowed to drink tainted water for eight days before repairs were made.

BELOW | Parents from across Portland testified during the Tuesday meeting at Creston.



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Water

Continued from A1

munication?" she said outside Creston on Tuesday afternoon. "That will give me the information I need to determine the actions that need to be taken."

But Smith also acknowledged that students at Creston, the site of Tuesday's meeting, were allowed to drink tainted water for eight days, the time between workers getting results back and when repairs were made. At Rose City Park, she said, signs were put up immediately telling students and staff not to drink the water.

Lead levels were double the federal safety standard in some readings. Testing at a third school, Lewis, showed no lead.

Shortly after Smith spoke to assembled media, Willamette Week reported unidentified district officials had done testing in the district from 2010 to 2012 and found fixtures in 47 buildings, some of them not used as schools, with lead levels above the federal level.

Some results showed levels as high as 174 parts per billion, the paper reported. The federal safety level is 15 parts per billion.

The Oregonian/OregonLive obtained a copy of the full database Tuesday night. It appears to show officials tested select fixtures at various schools in 2010, 2011 and 2012, in addition to systemwide tests in 2001 and follow-up tests in 2002.

It's unclear how the district fixed or repaired fixtures. It's also unclear why additional tests were conducted. Parents had requested the recent testing at Rose City Park and Creston.

The document was created in 2015 by Portland's current senior manager for health and safety, Andy Fridley. District officials agreed to let Fridley talk with The Oregonian/OregonLive about water



BETH NAKAMURA/STAFF

The district announced Friday that fountains and faucets in all schools, including Creston Elementary, above, would be blocked off and children given bottled water.

testing and maintenance on Friday afternoon, but the interview was pushed back and never rescheduled.

Smith didn't acknowledge or discuss the database when speaking with reporters Tuesday.

During the meeting she said her "assumption was that protocols were followed on each" finding. That could have involved replacing a filter or other repairs without alerting top administrators. She also said she was open to reconsidering how information about lead testing and repairs is shared.

On Friday, amid parent outcry, Smith first apologized then announced that fountains and faucets across the district would be blocked off and children would be given bottled water.

She said she's planning to hire outside investigators to look into "staff actions that resulted in a delay of shutting down the water and a failure to report that to the superintendent and the community."

Board member Steve Buel drew huge applause when he said Smith should play no role in the investigation. "This is poisoning thousands of children in the school district," Buel said. "We can't just flop this off to the superintendent and say investigate what's taking place."

Smith said she also plans to work with Multnomah

County and Oregon Health Authority experts and others on the district's rules for lead-filter replacements and maintenance.

Smith pointed to the district's decision in March to budget \$450,000 for lead testing this summer at all schools, what would amount to its first systemwide testing since 2001. That decision, she said, came in the wake of controversy in Flint, Michigan. Buel pushed back during the meeting and asked Smith to start those tests as soon as possible.

"We're acting like it's two schools with problems," he said. "But potentially it's 40 or 50. I think the parents would want to know as fast as they could to get their children tested."

Smith said the district will create a website so parents can track lead levels "in real time" as the tests are completed.

Buel also asked district maintenance officials about lead filters, which the district installed in several schools in 2002. In a memo to Rose City Park school administrators, Fridley, Portland's health and safety manager, said the district has done no systematic testing of water quality since then, "assuming" that the filters were 100 percent effective.

The district's chief operating officer, Tony Magliano, told Buel, "There were a lot of discrepancies around fil-

ter replacement." The filters had originally been changed "in-house by our own plumbers." But amid maintenance staffing issues, the district started contracting out.

"Can I say with absolutely certainty that every single filter is done? No," Magliano said. "But we have a process in place to get the labor to do it. It happens every year."

Parents and teachers said filters at schools including Sunnyside Environmental School have been clogged for months. One mother said her children have been refilling bottles from a sink at Sunnyside. She said the school leaders told her kids they had asked for the filters to be replaced to no avail.

Parents traveled from across the city to testify at the public meeting. Some asked if the district would pay for their kids' medical bills. Others asked for guidance in telling their children that they may be at risk. Several echoed Buel's concerns and told Smith they don't trust her to carry out the investigation.

Mike Southern, a Roseway Heights parent, said the controversy revealed a "failure of leadership."

"Lead is running through the blood of our kids," Southern said. "School board, you need to act. Carole Smith, you need to go."

Many parents applauded. Tuesday's meeting followed the first day of bottled water being issued at nearly 100 schools.

A Beverly Cleary parent, Paris Schaefer, said children there were being told to limit themselves to just one bottle to "save resources." Other parents testified kids at some schools were given an abundance of water, enough to pour out or throw at one other at Franklin High School.

Smith said she would call principals Wednesday morning to remind them students are supposed to receive two bottles.



744-7

Lead in drinking water a leadership crisis as well

Superintendent Carole Smith must show she can hold her administrators accountable for failings, or be held accountable herself

Two months after test results showed unsafe levels of lead in drinking water at two schools, Portland Public Schools is finally responding with the urgency that the crisis deserved long ago. The district will offer blood lead level screening for students attending the two schools, Creston K-8 and Rose City Park, provide bottled water for drinking and cooking at all its schools and investigate why staff failed to shut off the tainted water at Creston or notify the public sooner.

But there's another pressing task that Superintendent Carole Smith should address: making her case to the school board and an angry public that she deserves to keep her job.

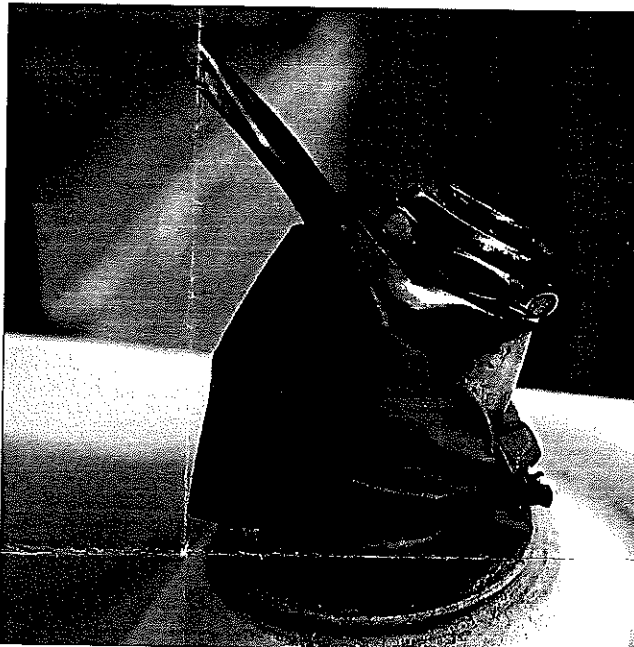
That she didn't even know about the lead test results until last Wednesday is both an explanation for her inaction and an indictment of her leadership.

Her response, once she learned of the lead levels, is encouraging. She ordered water fountains in all the schools to be shut down and directed staff to find bottled water for the rest of the school year. She has called for a personnel investigation to determine who in her administration knew of the test results and why it was handled so poorly. And she will develop a plan on how best to continue monitoring lead threats, she told The Oregonian/OregonLive editorial board.

But her ignorance of the test results also reflects a lack of institutional control, a recurring problem in a district where administrators are rarely held accountable for failing to meet students' needs. During Smith's tenure as superintendent, the district has shorted students in low-income schools of core classes, denied high school students access to a full schedule and failed to meet state standards for providing services for high-achieving students. Parents argue that the only way to get the district to pay attention to students' concerns is to relentlessly pressure administrators or file a complaint with state education authorities. Is it any surprise, then, that even basic health and safety matters are handled so carelessly?

Much depends on what Smith says and does in the coming days. She should explain who made the incomprehensible decision to allow students, teachers and staff to keep drinking the contaminated water for several days after tests showed it was unsafe. She should identify all those who knew of the tainted water and who determined the district's course of action. And she should show the public that she is holding those people accountable.

She should also explain why lead monitoring has fallen off the district's radar, considering that a majority of schools were shown to have lead in their water during



RICH PEDRONCELLI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tape covers a spout on a water fountain in California after several public water systems in that state were found to have unsafe levels of lead. Portland Public Schools plans to test the water at its own facilities after tests showed two schools with unsafe lead levels.

During Smith's tenure as superintendent, the district has shorted students in low-income schools of core classes, denied high school students access to a full schedule and failed to meet state standards for providing services for high-achieving students. Parents argue that the only way to get the district to pay attention to students' concerns is to relentlessly pressure administrators or file a complaint with state education authorities. Is it any surprise, then, that even basic health and safety matters are handled so carelessly?

a districtwide test conducted in 2000 and 2001. And finally, she should explain why statements to board members, the media and the public have included so many inaccuracies and misrepresentations.

For example, spokeswoman Christine Miles initially told The Oregonian/OregonLive's Betsy Hammond that the district immediately shut off access to fixtures with tainted water after learning of the test results. That was only true for Rose

City Park, not Creston, an error due to incomplete information, Miles said. PPS employees also told families and the school board that the lead results were found as a result of "routine" testing. Also not true. Those two schools were tested as a result of requests by members of those school communities. There is no routine testing, the district later clarified. And PPS staff delayed, then ducked out entirely, of an interview with Hammond last Friday. These are not signs of a district that cares about being transparent or honest with families. Rather, they reflect a district trying to cover up its own complacency.

Board chairman Tom Koehler said he has faith in Smith's leadership and pledged "full transparency." To that end, he should direct Smith to help hasten the release of internal emails in response to public records requests. The investigation, he said, will also help identify failures in processes and procedures.

That's a good step, but the board should not be eager to accept a lack of protocols to excuse a lack of common sense. The failure to cut off access to tainted water smacks of basic incompetence and should be treated as such.

Smith must show she can hold top administrators accountable. If she cannot, the board needs to step in.

Accountability at the district begins with her.

—The Oregonian/OregonLive editorial board

PPS snafu causes shift to bottled water

Lead found in two schools without proper notice

By SHASTA KEARNS MOORE
The Tribune

Portland Public Schools children will consume bottled water for the rest of the school year, officials announced late Friday evening. That is in response to revelations that — after pressure from parents — Portland Public Schools tested for lead in its water faucets and fixtures on March 22 and found 14 out of 92 of the fixtures at Creston K-8 and Rose City Park schools had unacceptable levels of lead.

The information was first made public to parents by Creston K-8 School Principal Conrad Hurdle on Wednesday, nearly two months later. A second test on April 22 confirmed elevated levels of lead.

Portland Public Schools regrets not having notified families and staff as soon as the tests indicated that there were elevated levels of lead," Smith wrote Friday afternoon in a message to parents. "While PPS staff worked quickly to replace all fixtures that indicated elevated levels of lead, we did not turn off the water in those faucets and drinking fountains prior to them being replaced and we should have."

Smith could face some political fallout from the lack of notification. As of press time, more than 600 people had signed a Change.org petition asking for her resignation or termination. The district also is hoping to ask voters in November for another multimillion-dollar school improvement bond.

The district planned to hold a community meeting Tuesday evening at Creston school on the issue.

In a Friday evening announcement, the district seemed to dramatically ramp up its response, saying it would turn off all drinking fountains in the district and offer bottled water for the rest of the year until it could test all the fixtures.

"We are taking these steps out of an abundance of caution for our students, our teachers, and our staff, as we work to determine whether additional schools have elevated levels of lead in the drinking water," Smith said in a news release.

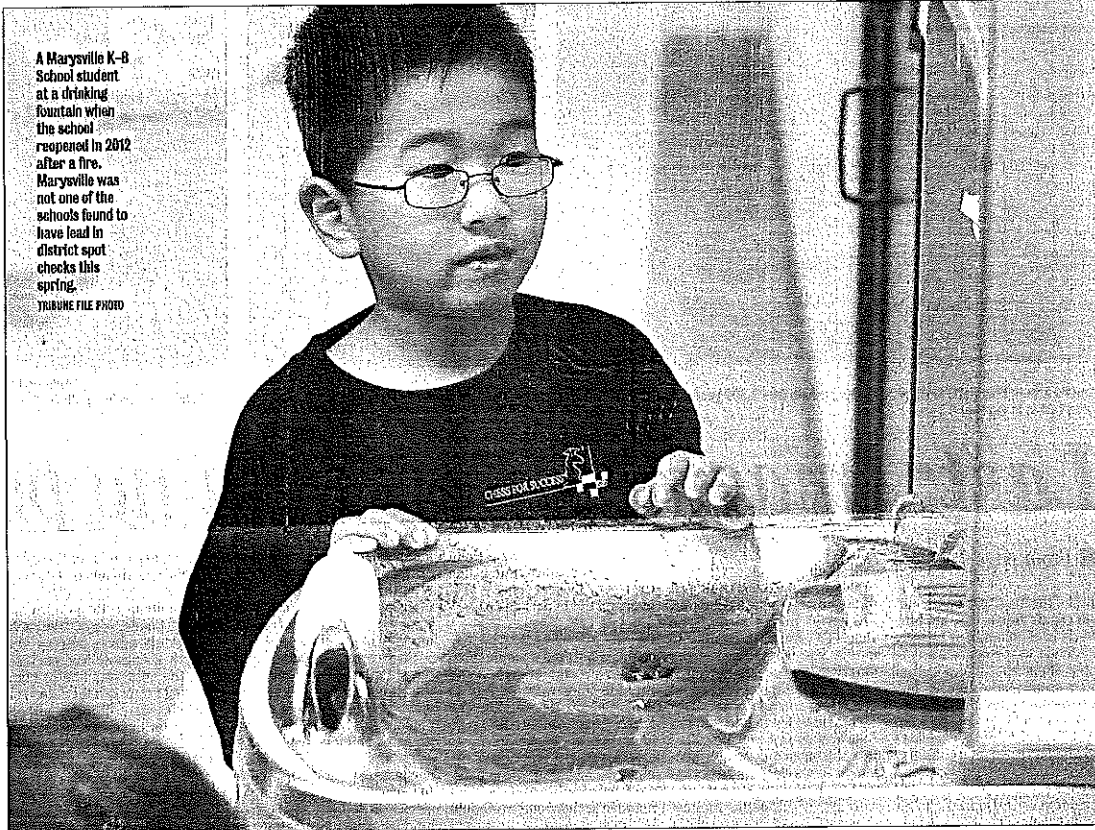
Students at both Creston and Rose City Park will get on-site tests to measure lead in their blood, the district said.

Except for two science room sinks that will now be used only for washing, the fixtures at those schools have been replaced, and retesting will occur the week of June 6, Smith said.

The rest of the fixtures in all the schools will be tested over the summer, the district said.

Safe exposure level debated

Advocates for lead testing and abatement say the Environmental Protection Agency's "action level" of lead at 15 parts per billion is a political compro-



A Marysville K-8 School student at a drinking fountain when the school reopened in 2012 after a fire. Marysville was not one of the schools found to have lead in district spot checks this spring.
TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

mise, and that any detectable lead can cause health problems, especially in young children.

According to the Portland-based national nonprofit Lead Safe America Foundation, symptoms of lead poisoning can range from brain damage, behavioral disorders and attention-deficit disorder, among other developmental disabilities.

The 2016-17 PPS budget includes money for lead testing districtwide.

The prevalence of lead has been a recent hot-button issue nationally since the discovery of lead in Flint, Michigan's drinking water and also locally with the Department of Environmental Quality's discovery of airborne toxins, including lead, near the Bullseye Glass plant in Southeast Portland.

2001 round of testing

This is not the first time the district has found dangerously high levels of lead in its drinking water.

In 2001, the district found 35 out of 40 buildings tested had fixtures leaking lead into its drinking water — at levels as high as 162 parts per billion.

The district then went on a campaign to replace fixtures — particularly bubbler-type drinking fountains — and pipes. They installed Pentair Pentek CFB-PB10 filters on any replacement fixture that was still shown to have more than

15 parts per billion of lead. Those filters will reduce — but not eliminate — lead particles in at least 2,000 gallons of water. District officials said they have been replaced annually or as needed by a contractor.

"It's now time for permanent

changes," then-interim superintendent Jim Scherzinger said on Aug. 17, 2001.

In a question-and-answer segment on the district website, it promised to continue checking for lead after repairs were made.

District officials have since backtracked on earlier statements last week that they routinely test for lead. Instead, all filters were checked the year after installation and 1 percent of those were found to have failed. The following

year, 10 percent of the filters were tested and none were over the 15 parts per billion level. Since then, the district has done only spot tests as requested.

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District reveals more schools with lead in water

By Betsy Hammond
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Portland Superintendent Carole Smith disclosed Wednesday that as many as five additional Portland schools that showed elevated levels of lead in drinking water may also have drinking fountains or food preparation sinks that were not fixed.

A single drinking fountain or sink in each of the schools — Jackson Middle School, Applegate Head Start, Vernon School, Peninsula Elementary and Whitman Elementary — was found to be giving off tainted water, Smith said.

The district has no records saying those problems were fixed, she said. All those fountains and sinks were closed to all users

You can look up the lead testing results for any Portland school using the Oregonian/OregonLive's searchable database, online at projects.oregonlive.com/LeadSchools.

as of Tuesday and testing was launched Wednesday, she said.

The Oregonian/OregonLive obtained records late Wednesday showing lead testing and remediation steps at school buildings since 2002, including tests this year at Rose City Park and Creston.

The district's chief operating officer, Tony Magliano, also shared that informa-

Lead

Continued from A1

renovation or construction. None of the results beyond Vernon's showed higher than 28 parts per billion.

It's also not clear whether officials reached lead levels at other schools. The documents obtained Wednesday by The Oregonian/OregonLive show virtually no "clearance testing" for dozens of fixtures.

Smith and other Portland Public Schools leaders are scrambling to regain public trust after being forced to acknowledge they knew that young children were being exposed to unsafe drinking water but did not immediately shut off all tainted fountains and sinks and were slow, or failed, entirely, to notify parents and employees.

Oregon Public Broadcast- ing reported emails showing officials had dismissed high lead levels at certain schools as far back as 2012.

Smith told hundreds gathered at a second community meeting this one at Rose City Park School, that she and outside experts will take steps to uncover past problems and

institute better practices going forward.

All fountains and faucets in all schools and district buildings will be tested this summer, Smith said. A contractor has been hired and will begin work June 8, the second-to-last day of the school year, she said.

The school board will hire an outside agency to investigate who knew about the high lead results, who failed to inform the superintendent and parents, and who failed to shut off access to water known to be tainted, and why, Smith said she acted as soon as she learned of the positive lead tests and the district's insufficient response. Smith also plans to create a task force of experts to decide what Portland Public Schools should do about water quality going forward.

Both Smith and the memo said data on lead testing had been shared with Willamette Week in February 2015. It was shared again with the school board Tuesday. The paper didn't report the data until Tuesday, just before an emergency board meeting.

The Oregonian/OregonLive obtained its own copy of the data Tuesday night. According to an analysis, Portland

tion in a memo sent to school board members Wednesday. The memo said fixes could have included replacing fixtures, installing filters or posting signs telling staffers and students not to use the fixtures.

One of the fixtures without a record of fixes, a bubbler in Vernon's Room 202, tested at 130 parts per billion of lead in April 2012. The federal safety level is 15 parts per billion.

A single drinking fountain at Franklin High and Foubton School also had tainted water, but those schools were shut down last summer. Their entire plumbing systems are being replaced during full-scale

— as high as 16 times the federal threshold — were found at Jefferson High, Marshall High, Kelly Elementary and Vernon School, all in 2012.

Jefferson High and Groubleman had the most tainted water sources at 15 and 13, respectively.

Some of the district's youngest students were affected, with high levels found in drinking fountains at the Rainona and Seacawawa Head Start locations.

The testing data provided to Willamette Week did not include information about repair or mitigation efforts, Magliano wrote.

"In order to verify that the remediation data in the database is correct," he said, "we are currently physically inventorying buildings in the locations that the data indicates had elevated levels of lead."

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WATER SAFETY

Salem-Keizer to test schools for lead

Cost of precautionary measure is unknown

TRACY LOEW 744-7
STATESMAN JOURNAL

The Salem-Keizer School District will test drinking fountains and faucets in all 65 of its schools for lead contamination, district officials announced Thursday. Students and staff at one school — Salem Heights Elementary — already have been provided with bottled water as a precaution, district spokesman Jay Remy said.

The move comes as school districts around the country, including Portland Public Schools, are discovering hazardous lead levels at the tap. "The district believed the prudent thing to do would be to test everywhere," Remy said. Lead can leach from aging water pipes. Exposure to lead can cause health problems ranging from stomach distress to brain damage. Children are especially susceptible because their bodies absorb metals at higher rates than adults. It's not a new problem, but has come

under increased scrutiny in light of the public health disaster in Flint, Michigan, where a series of cost-cutting measures and mistakes caused the lead poisoning of an entire community. A Statesman Journal analysis in March found that 46 public water systems Oregon, including Portland's, have exceeded regulatory limits for lead in drinking water during the past four years. Nearly a quarter of the flagged systems were schools and day care centers on private wells. Schools on municipal water, however, don't fall under federal lead-testing re-

quirements. All but four of Salem-Keizer's schools use city water. In March, Remy said the district believed Salem-Keizer schools did not need to be tested. That's because, unlike Portland, Salem treats its drinking water with soda ash to control corrosion. Keizer has naturally hard water, which protects pipes. But officials reversed course after seeing results from other school districts, including Portland, where newly released results showed more than half of 90 school sites tested between 2010

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Water

Continued from Page 1A

and 2012 had elevated levels of lead.

"Even with the city water being good, it's possible for you to have issues," Remy said.

Testing will take place over the summer, Remy said. It will begin with schools with older plumbing, which are more likely to have lead pipes or fittings. Remediation will be

complete before the 2016-17 school year. The district has not yet hired a contractor or developed a cost estimate.

"We know it will be thousands and thousands of dollars. Probably hundreds of thousands of dollars," Remy said.

This will be the first time the Salem-Keizer School District has systematically tested school taps for lead. Over the past 10 years, the district has tested the water at 17 schools for a range of contaminants in response to complaints about color or taste, Remy said. None of those tests showed high lead levels.

The district regularly tests the water at four country schools on walls. One of those, Valley Inquiry Charter School, has struggled with high lead and copper levels. Students and staff there have been drinking bottled water for more than a year.

And, last week, district officials found a report of lead testing done at 29 schools in 2001, Remy said. It showed high lead levels at Salem Heights Elementary School. Officials can't find any records of remediation done there, although some plumbing was replaced in 2012.

The district already has tested taps at the school and is awaiting results, Remy said. It's providing bottled water in the meantime.

744-7
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East County school districts testing for lead in water system

Concerns about lead discovery in Portland schools prompt precautions in local schools

By TERESA CARSON
The Outlook

With Portland Public Schools in hot water over their handling of elevated levels of lead in school water, some school districts in East Multnomah County are having their water checked too.

Gresham-Barlow and Reynolds school districts are about to test the water available in their schools, and recent tests found the water safe at the Centennial School District.

IF YOU'RE WORRIED

"In light of concerns raised in other school districts in Oregon, the Gresham-Barlow School District is voluntarily testing for lead in the drinking water in all of the district's schools," said Athena Vadnais, director of communications, in a statement.

In Portland, some are calling for the removal of PPS Superintendent Carole Smith because

of recent disclosures that the district tested water at 47 schools in 2010 and 2012 and found elevated lead levels, but did not immediately inform parents or shut off the faucets and drinking fountains.

Smith said one or more administrators could be put on leave during an investigation into why she didn't know until very recently about the lead test results this spring and the actions taken to replace water fixtures at two schools, Creston and Rose City Park Elementary.

Lead poisoning can cause neurological problems and learning delays in children. It can cause brain damage, lower intelligence, behavior and learning problems and hyperactivity. In severe cases, children can be left with impaired speech and language, slowed growth, kidney and liver damage and hearing damage, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

Except in severe cases, there are rarely noticeable symptoms. People with lead poisoning often look and act healthy or the symptoms can be confused with common ailments such as the flu. Children might seem tired or be hyperactive and have a short attention span. They could be cranky or have a poor appetite, the OHA said. They might have weight loss, sleep problems, constipation or stomach problems.

Despite the concern over lead in water, exposure to dust from lead paint is the most common way people come in contact with

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Lead: Centennial water passes tests

From Page A1

lead, according to the OHA. Lead also has been found in some children's toys or jewelry.

East Multnomah County school leaders are being proactive. The Gresham-Barlow district is following informa-

tion and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency for lead testing and expects to have results by around Friday, June 10. The "results will be communicated with staff and families," Vadnais said.

The Reynolds district also is "voluntarily testing drinking water for lead in all of our schools," said Andrea Watson, director of communications, adding that while it's unclear how long this might take, the district will share the results with families and staff as soon as they are available.

For its part, the city of Gresham issued a statement telling people the water going into homes and buildings is safe. The city's "230 miles of pipe deliver safe, convenient water from three protected water sources to more than 100,000 Gresham citizens," the city said in a statement released

Wednesday, June 1.

The city continually monitors water quality to ensure it is safe and clean. In 2015, the city met or exceeded all federal drinking water quality standards, the announcement said.

But that only means the water is safe to the point where it reaches homes, schools and other buildings.

"We do not have lead in the infrastructure that we deliver water through," said Elizabeth Coffey, Gresham's communications manager. "Once the water leaves the city pipes... that is when problems can occur."

The Centennial School District had its water tested in March and got the results back in April. "All the results were below the EPA standards for lead," said Carol Fenstermacher, Centennial's community engagement coordinator. "In addition, each Centennial school has a filtered water

fountain that also has a spigot to fill water bottles. Corbett School District has not tested the water for lead in any of its buildings recently and has no immediate plans to do so.

Superintendent Randy Trani said the district is looking through its records to see when it was last tested.

"We have an environmental quality company come out twice yearly to mostly watch asbestos and lead paint issues," Trani said in an email. The district will talk with that company about testing but "there are not definite plans at this point," he said.

Mt. Hood Community College has not had the water tested for lead in about a decade, but no problems were detected at the last testing. The college's pipes were replaced around 1989 or 2000, said Bruce Battie, director of marketing.

Gresham, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
Outlook
(Circ. 2xw. 7,434)

JUN 3 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Schools 744-7 scramble to test for lead

By Brad Schmidt
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Across 16 Portland-area school districts educating nearly 225,000 students, only one confirmed Thursday that it systematically tests lead levels in drinking water.

For most school districts, spot testing hasn't occurred in years — if at all.

Now, Portland's unfolding public-relations crisis over newly disclosed lead levels is pushing many other districts to promise sweeping lead testing this summer. The push follows efforts nationally to better track lead in the wake of excessively high levels found last year throughout Flint, Michigan.

From Hillsboro to Oregon City to Reynolds in Troutdale, district officials said this week they would conduct testing to confirm local schools provide safe drinking water. If high lead levels are found, officials say, they'll make necessary improvements, though some districts are worried growing demand could cause testing delays.

"In light of what's happening ... we are moving ahead with having all of our buildings tested as soon as possible, just as a precaution," said Connie Potter, chief of staff for the Forest Grove School District, which hasn't conducted testing since 2009.

The scale of testing will vary by district, with some planning to check every faucet and fountain and oth-

See Lead, A7

Lead

Continued from A1

ers expecting more modest sampling.

Lake Oswego was among the first to act, collecting water samples Thursday morning from at least two sinks and two water fountains in each of the district's 10 schools. Officials had good reason to act.

"We cannot find any records for past testing," spokeswoman Nancy Duijn said.

Testing plans

Though no amount of lead is considered safe, federal drinking-water standards set an "action level" of 15 parts per billion. In Portland Public Schools, water samples from more than 50 schools tested above that level according to spot checks in recent years. But officials didn't immediately disclose the findings and have no evidence they made fixes in at least seven schools.

Portland — Oregon's largest district, with more than 48,000 students — is now promising systemwide testing this summer for the first time since 2001.

So is Beaverton School District.

Last week, just days before Portland's firestorm erupted, Beaverton school officials disclosed two high tests from Highland Park Middle School. In response, the district provided bottled water and shut off drinking fountains, but officials said they couldn't move forward on a \$1.5 million re-piping project until 2017.

Late Friday, officials said they had decided to shut down all drinking fountains in five of its elementary schools as a precaution because they have old water systems. They will provide bottled water at Elmonica, Errol Hassell, Greenway, Hazeldale and Rock Creek.

The district announced Thursday it would move to test every school, something that apparently has never happened, spokeswoman Maureen Wheeler said.

"To my knowledge, it's been kind of a case-by-case basis," she said. "There's no systemwide testing that's been done."

District officials said they don't expect drinking water in the five schools shut down Friday will test positive for lead this month. But they said those five schools have water systems that were installed before 1986, when the U.S. banned use of lead-containing solder and fixtures that can leach lead into drinking water, so they can't say for sure the drinking water is safe. It is unclear how district offi-

cial ruled out similar risks at other district schools built before 1986.

Testing was authorized May 13 and a contract, estimated at \$150,000, should be in place by Friday, she said. Beaverton is the state's third-largest district, with nearly 41,000 students across 51 schools.

"And we're talking about every drinking fountain and faucet," Wheeler said of the testing.

Districts respond

Likewise, the North Clackamas School District also promised sweeping testing. Officials on Thursday could find no records of past analysis since 2002, when no tests exceeded 15 parts per billion, spokesman Joe Krumm said.

"We're going to test again, go through everything again," Krumm said. Asked why the district would do so, he said: "In response to the issue getting raised."

Other districts have completed more recent rounds of testing but haven't always followed up.

Hillsboro last did testing in 2010 and found no water with levels above 15 parts per billion, spokeswoman Beth Graser said. The district, which has enrollment of nearly 21,000, will retest schools this summer.

At David Douglas, testing in 2013 found high lead levels in 11 buildings, according to information provided by the district Thursday. Officials shut off water and provided bottled water, later re-piping some of the impacted facilities.

But now, three years later, the district still provides bottled water at Gilbert Park Elementary School and North Powellhurst School, which is used as a childcare facility.

Officials said they've done some testing over the past two years but the scope wasn't immediately available.

"Our intent is to continue a testing program going forward," spokesman Dan McCutie said. "What that looks like — do we do every school every year or some kind of rotating basis — I don't know."

On Friday, Jesuit High School officials said they last tested for lead in March 2014 and did not find high levels. The private school, which has enrollment of about 1,300, said in a statement that it will continue "regular" testing.

Officials for Reynolds and Oregon City said Thursday they haven't conducted districtwide testing before but plan to this summer.

"This is new to a lot of us," said Michael Clark, an Oregon City spokesman.

Separately, officials for

Gresham-Barlow and Gladstone could offer no details Thursday about past testing, saying they'd need to review records.

But Gresham-Barlow is currently conducting lead testing in all district schools, with results expected next week, spokeswoman Athena Vadnais said in an email. Gladstone hopes to test its four schools as soon as possible.

"The waiting list just got longer," spokeswoman Leslie Robinette said, noting the growing interest in testing across the region.

Parkrose issued a statement Friday saying it hasn't had past problems but will conduct tests. West-Linn Wilsonville said in a statement Friday that it hasn't performed testing in the past but will begin this summer.

Only Tigard-Tualatin

Among large districts in the Portland area, only Tigard-Tualatin performs annual testing.

Officials began reviewing water at James Templeton Elementary in 2010 prompted by complaints about quality. When tests from 2013 came back showing high lead levels, officials decided to test each district school built through 1985, when lead solder was banned from plumbing. That meant checking water from as many as 27 rooms in a given school.

Since then, officials have tested one or two rooms at each school each year. The district adopted the random sampling program to help reassure students, parents and staff that officials were committed to testing.

"We wanted to follow up," spokeswoman Susan Stark Haydon said, "and do what we needed to do to make sure the water was safe."

The Centennial School District doesn't do regular testing. Officials checked schools in 2010 and more recently completed testing in March, thanks to the foresight of Rick Larson, the district's director of business and operations.

Larson said he read the national news about Flint, Michigan, and tests involving some Salem-Keizer facilities with high lead levels. He saw the writing on the wall.

School employees took two samples from each elementary school and four from each secondary school. Testing, which cost \$750, uncovered no problems.

"I figured it was going to become a crisis in 2016," said Larson, who next month will celebrate his 21st anniversary with Centennial. "And lo and behold, it is."

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The Oregonian
(Circ. D. 247,833)

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City didn't warn of lead at arts center

By Brad Schmidt
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Portland officials detected high lead levels in the drinking water of a city park building in 2011, 2012 and 2013 but took few steps to make the water safe until last week, officials announced Sunday.

The disclosure follows an inquiry from The Oregonian/OregonLive on Friday, when a parks spokesman said the city didn't systematically test lead levels at park facilities.

Sunday's disclosure revealed that testing of the Multnomah Arts Center in Southwest Portland found high lead levels in 11 water samples collected from a kitchen, a classroom and drinking fountains. The center offers art classes and preschool for children.

It's the latest acknowledgment that government officials have known about high lead levels in public buildings but haven't notified residents or been able to document necessary fixes. The city of Portland's disclosure follows a growing public-relations crisis involving Portland Public Schools, where officials have failed to show they acted on high lead tests at several schools.

In an email Saturday, Superintendent Carole Smith expressed regret school district leaders failed to immediately notify students, parents and staff when testing at schools across the district detected

Testing of the Multnomah Arts Center in Southwest Portland found high lead levels in 11 water samples collected.

See Lead, A6

Lead

Continued from A1

lead levels exceeding the federal standard of 15 parts per billion. "I specifically want to take responsibility for the delay in notification to those directly affected by the situation," she wrote. "This gap in information and communications regarding health and safety cannot happen again, and I am working to ensure that it won't."

Five rounds of testing at the Multnomah Arts Center took place between February 2011 and June 2013 -- with high lead levels found each time. Officials said Sunday they took "some corrective actions" for sinks in 2013. But Mark Ross, a Portland Parks & Recreation spokesman, would not provide details.

According to a city announcement, Portland Parks & Recreation "leadership" didn't learn about those past high test results until "late" Friday. Yet parks officials also said they installed or replaced filters Tuesday -- three days before that. Ross couldn't explain the gap.

Portland Commissioner Amanda Fritz has overseen Portland Parks & Recreation since June 2013, and Mike Abbate has been director since October 2011.

Commissioner Nick Fish oversaw the bureau in 2011 and 2012, when that testing occurred. The Environmental Protection Agency sets an "action level" of 15 parts per billion for lead in drinking water. But water from a drinking fountain at the city-owned facility in Southwest Portland collected June 19, 2013, tested as high as 62.5 parts per billion.

Other high levels from 2011 to 2013 ranged from 17 to 58 parts per billion. Until new testing is complete, Portland officials said they've shut off fountains and placed signs in front of faucets warning not to drink the water. Bottled water will be provided in the building at 7688 S.W. Capitol Highway. Portland officials say they'll also test two other Southwest locations: the Portland Children's Museum and the Fulton Park Community Center.

Although park officials say they think the likelihood of exposure at each site is "very low," they'll flush water every morning until testing can be completed. City officials Sunday did not propose checking lead levels at other parks facilities, saying they'll determine if such testing is needed.

Portland water's relatively low pH levels make it susceptible to leaching lead from plumbing.

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resting

Continued from A1

But lead contamination could come from plumbing in the schools that off-site tests would not turn up.

"It hasn't even been on anybody's mind, but then you see something like Portland said Deen Hyton, facilities director at Crook County School District.

Bend-La Pine is now in the process of testing all its schools for lead, according to Repman. Crook County and Jefferson County school districts also plan to test their schools this summer.

A Redmond School District spokeswoman said the district has no plans to test its water.

In April, Gov. Kate Brown directed the Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Department of Education to review policies on lead testing and develop recommendations for schools. It's too soon to say whether that could include required testing, said Dave Leland, program manager for drinking water services at the health authority.

For now, he said, schools should follow guidelines from the federal Environmental Protection Agency, which encourages them to test water and disclose results to staff, parents and the public.

"I wouldn't be surprised if we (added) more schools to that list," Barnes said.

Reporter: 503-617-7837, aspegman@bendbulletin.com

The city of Bend completed its latest round of testing in 2015; of the 30 sites tested, the only Bend-La Pine building tested was the district administrative offices downtown, according to Drexell Barnes, supervisor at the city's water quality lab.

An Associated Press analysis of EPA data found no water systems in Central Oregon had water samples that exceeded the federal standard for lead levels between 2013 and late 2015.

The city of Bend completed its latest round of testing in 2015; of the 30 sites tested, the only Bend-La Pine building tested was the district administrative offices downtown, according to Drexell Barnes, supervisor at the city's water quality lab.

Now the city is picking out sites for its next round of testing.

"I wouldn't be surprised if we (added) more schools to that list," Barnes said.

Reporter: 503-617-7837, aspegman@bendbulletin.com

Local schools to test water for lead after Portland crisis

By Abby Speegman
The Bulletin

Prompted by a scandal still unfolding in Portland, schools in Central Oregon plans to test their water for unsafe levels of lead.

"It's definitely something that's been in the news, so it's something that we've been taking a look at," said Julianne Repman, a spokeswoman for Bend-La Pine Schools, which previously relied on

testing by the water systems that serve its schools.

Following a crisis in Flint, Michigan, where dangerous levels of lead were found in the drinking water, schools across the country started testing their drinking water.

In March, two schools in Portland recorded elevated levels of lead, but the water was not immediately turned off. Parents learned of it only recently. Portland Public Schools shut

down drinking fountains late last month at all of its schools and will use bottled water for the remaining school year, according to The Associated Press.

Among those now calling for the Portland superintendent to resign is state Rep. Korie Buehler. Buehler, who has said he will make lead testing in school water a priority in the next legislative session.

Schools in Tacoma, Wash.

ington, and Beaverton have also reported elevated levels of lead in their water.

Federal law requires lead testing be done regularly in public drinking water systems, but there is no requirement that schools test their water. However, schools that have their own water systems — as the case in Powell, Burt and Paulina — are subject to federal regulations.

See Testing/A6

Bend, OR
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Bend Bulletin
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Corrections

In a story headlined "Local schools to test water for lead after Portland crisis," which appeared Monday, June 6, on Page A1, the status of water testing in Redmond School District was wrong due to incorrect information provided to The Bulletin. The district plans to test for lead in the water at John Tuck Elementary School, Tumalo Community School and M.A. Lynch Elementary School.

In a story headlined "Oregon GOP rallies around Trump," which appeared Sunday, June 5, on Page A1, the position of a member of the Oregon Republican Party (leadership was incorrect. Chris Barreto is the party's secretary.

The Event Calendar, which appeared Sunday, June 5, on Page B2, contained an incorrect listing. The Barrel Race Jackpot at the 76th Annual Sisters Race, previously scheduled for today, has been canceled. For more information, see C1.

The Bulletin regrets the errors.

After tests show high lead levels in Portland Public Schools water, parents and teachers reach a

BOILING POINT



TRIBUNE PHOTO: JONATHAN HOUSE

Portland Public Schools teacher and parent Molly Sims angrily confronts school officials about why they didn't notify the public of lead testing earlier this year, during a Wednesday meeting at Rose City Park School.

PPS WORKERS PUT ON LEAVE PENDING PROBE OF PROTOCOL FOR LEAD TESTS

By SHASTA KEARNS MOORE
The Tribune

The Portland Public Schools board has hired Stoll Berne to investigate the district's systemic response to lead and will also complete a personnel review.

Chief Operating Officer Tony Magliano and Andy Fridley, senior manager for health and safety, will be on paid administrative leave during the monthlong investigation.

"We need to know — and the public deserves to know — what happened and how the accurate information about the health and safety of our schools was not immediately available leading to legitimate concerns about lead in our water," said board chair Tom Koehler in a Thursday evening news release. "We need to know if we have the right protocols in place and where we need to make improvements. We also need to know if there are personnel issues that resulted in this delay of information."

"The Portland-based law firm's investigation will look at the systems the district had in place to respond to lead issues, how it managed information about those issues and what operations or employees might have been inadequate."

"The board and I know that mistakes were made, and I encourage this investigation into our systems and protocols as well as a related personnel review," said Superintendent Carole Smith in the news release. "I also look forward to a swift conclusion and recommendations from the investigation to provide an independent assessment of where we can improve our internal systems and communications in the future on behalf of our students and staff."



MAGLIANO

ON PAGE 2

- High levels of radon gas discovered in six Portland schools.
- Carole Smith's leadership called into question during Wednesday meeting.

What you need to know about lead in Portland Public Schools



What happened?

After urging from parents, the district conducted lead tests at three schools this spring. Fourteen fixtures at Creston and Rose City Park schools were found to have lead above the district's 15 parts per billion benchmark. Most of them were replaced, with two sinks that are no longer allowed for drinking water or food preparation.

However, the district tested the fixtures on March 22 and April 22 but did not tell the public about the lead findings until Friday, May 27. The fixtures at Creston were also left open for use for eight days after the tests confirmed elevated lead levels.

Do Portland schools regularly test for lead?

No. The last time Portland Public Schools conducted systemwide tests for lead was in 2001. Follow-up tests on replaced fixtures came in 2002, then a sampling in 2003.

A document surfaced last week suggesting that additional lead testing had been done in 2010 and 2012. District officials say they have documentation that they did some sort of remediation after lead was found in 140 fixtures. But five fixtures — a food prep sink at Peninsula Elementary School and fountains at Applegate Elementary School, Jackson Middle School, Vernon Elementary School and Whitman Elementary School — have yet to be fixed.

In April, Gov. Kate Brown called for the Oregon Health Authority to look into statewide school lead issues that could lead to a requirement to test for lead.

So what is PPS going to do about it?

Superintendent Smith laid out her plan during community meetings last week and the district has set up a webpage on this issue at pps.net.

The district had already budgeted \$450,000 to conduct "water quality testing" and resulting renovations during this summer. Smith also says that the city of Portland's Water Bureau has agreed to an in-kind donation of \$100,000 of water analysis. The superintendent is also willing to dip into contingency funds to ensure the work is done by the start of school.

Smith also announced the creation of a Healthy Water Task Force, which will recruit members from Multnomah County Health Department, the Oregon Health Authority, environmental groups and water quality engineers.



Who know what when?

That is the question everyone is asking themselves. Superintendent Carole Smith says she wasn't aware of this year's lead testing nor results until Wednesday, May 25. Once she had that information, she says she "acted immediately" to shut off water supplies and come up with a plan to offer bottled water. That was on the evening of Friday, May 27.

Emails have surfaced between top officials from 2012 that show the beginnings of a campaign to put stickers on faucets with lead issues, but that plan never materialized.



Will the superintendent get to keep her job?

Carole Smith says she is focused on remedying this crisis and getting to the bottom of what happened.

The school board has vowed to investigate and take necessary action.

"We are committed to understanding exactly how this happened and holding folks accountable," says board Chairman Tom Koehler.

(See page 2 for more on this subject.)

Did PPS inaction actually poison kids?

No one really knows for sure yet. A Creston School parent of a 9-year-old, Tina Harper, filed a formal complaint with the district Thursday, June 2. During the last seven months, the girl's kidney issues have unexpectedly become critical, requiring long hospitalizations, Harper says.

Perry Cabot, who is in charge of Multnomah County's lead prevention program, told parents Wednesday that there is a lot of uncertainty but the risk is low.

"The answer is probably that: No, there is not significant risk for (a) child," he says, but Cabot adds: "I'm not willing to say there is no risk."

Lead tests are conducted on water that has been left sitting overnight. During a day of use, the levels are much lower.



What happens if a kid is poisoned?

If a child ingests even a small amount of lead, it can cause permanent and irreversible damage to their brain and nervous system, according to the Mayo Clinic. The lead fills in calcium receptors and stunts development, leading to brain damage, learning difficulties, behavioral and attention problems.

Where does the lead come from?

Lead in water comes from pipes installed before the 1986 Safe Drinking Water Act. Public utilities, including the Portland Water Bureau, dug up and replaced leaded pipes or leaded solder in the 1990s. So, lead can still be found in the interior plumbing of buildings but not in the mainlines.

Lead is more commonly found in paint from before 1978 and old toys, appliances, tubs or sinks. Cabot tells Oregon Public Broadcasting that of the 188 cases of lead poisoning in the last three years, the overwhelming majority came from lead paint dust or chips.

"I would be especially worried if I had a baby or a crawling infant in an older home," Cabot says.

Kadon found in Portland schools

Rooms in six PPS buildings test high for radioactive gas

By SHASTA KEARNS MOORE
The Tribune

Parents of Portland Public Schools children have something else to worry about this week: Radon gas.

Coming in the midst of reports of elevated lead levels in PPS water fixtures, the district announced late Wednesday that tests also have discovered high levels of the radioactive, cancer-causing gas in nine rooms of six schools. Those schools are: Meek, Beaumont, Whitman, Roseway Heights, Lent and Marysville.

The Environmental Protection Agency recommends retesting those rooms during colder months, but a district official says they want to retest immediately to be sure of safety.

An additional 121 rooms in PPS buildings were found to have a lower level (between four and 10 picocuries per liter) of radon, at which the EPA says the rooms should be monitored and retested.

Facilities and Asset Management Senior Manager David Hobbs sent a message to the school board that such testing had not been done since 2001.

The department contracted with a firm to do the testing in March of this year.

Should the radon need remediation, Hobbs said the district would likely undertake similar efforts to those in 2001 — such as creating ventilation systems to prevent radon from leaking in from the soil.

PPS tested 26 buildings during this latest round. It was in response to new legislation that mandates radon tests by 2021.

There are no federal or state requirements to test for lead in schools. However, Gov. Kate Brown directed the Oregon Health Authority in April to study what schools around the state are doing about lead and what they need in order to do more.



TRIBUNE PHOTOS: JONATHAN HOUSE

Portland Public Schools superintendent Carole Smith defends the district's handling of the presence of lead in their water supply during a Wednesday evening meeting at Rose City Park School. The evening's moderator, state Sen. Michael Dembrow, is also pictured.

PPS chief defends job to angry parents

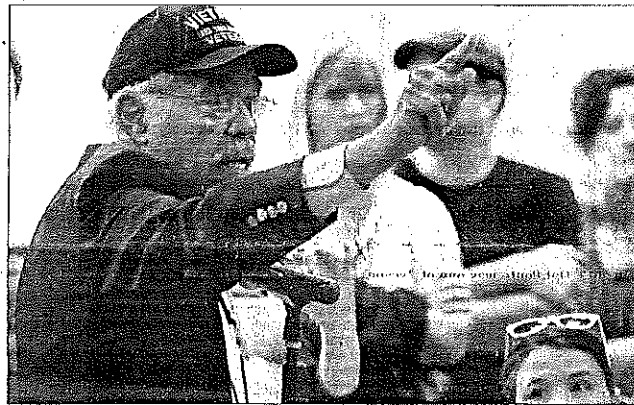
Meeting gets heated as crowd demands answers from Smith

By SHASTA KEARNS MOORE
The Tribune

Superintendent Carole Smith faced heated questions about why she should be allowed to keep her job as parents, teachers and community members packed a gym at Rose City Park School for a Wednesday evening meeting on the district's revelations of lead in its drinking water.

Tension reached its zenith as state Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, who moderated the June 1 event, squared off with public access TV talk show host and erstwhile mayoral candidate Bruce Broussard.

"Will you please respond to us now as to why you feel you should still be qualified to keep that job?" Broussard asked



Bruce Broussard repeatedly asks Portland Public Schools Superintendent Carole Smith if she thinks that she deserves to keep her job during a townhall to address recent findings of lead in various district buildings' water supplies.

Smith in a stuffy room filled with more than a hundred people. "That's not why we are here,"

Dembrow said, standing as a sort of slicked between the two of them.

The tension broke when Smith got up to take the microphone and answer the question.

"Right now, what I'm focused on is the safety of our kids," she said, noting the successes the district has had under her eight-year leadership, from a boost in graduation rates to passage of a bond measure. "Are there many things that I still feel like we need to take care of as a district? Absolutely."

"This did not seem to mollify commentators who continued to ask her to step down, with loud applause from the audience.

Smith says past budgets, during the economic downturn, have prioritized educational needs — like teachers.

Board Chairman Tom Koehler responded measuredly to requests to terminate Smith's employment, saying that while she has his support, the board is looking for a third party investigation on procedure, judgment and communication over lead in the schools' water supply.

"We are committed to understanding exactly how this happened and holding folks accountable," he said.

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Schools find, fix lead in water

Though repairs are complete and lead levels reduced, bottled water is being provided at three Eugene schools

By JEFF WRIGHT
The Register-Guard

Preliminary spot sampling by Eugene School District officials in late March and April found a few cases of slightly elevated lead levels in water at Sheldon High School, Kennedy Middle School and the district's Education Center, officials said in an email to district parents Mon-

day night. An elevated level also was found Monday at Roosevelt Middle School in the first of two samplings, district spokeswoman Kerry Delf said. Even though plumbing fixture repairs have been made and no known elevated levels exist as of Monday night, the district in "an abundance of caution" intends to distribute cases of bot-

tled water at those four school buildings beginning on Tuesday, Delf said.

Equipment allowing for the filtering of water at those sites also will be made available, she said.

Flushing out water sources will be done at all district schools every morning before use, Delf added.

In the wake of national concerns about lead in school buildings' water systems — from Flint, Mich., to Portland — the Eugene district began testing

water sources after spring break in March, Delf said.

The elevated levels at two drinking fountains at Sheldon, and at rarely used sinks at Kennedy and the Education Center, were discovered by facilities staff in April following testing in late March, Delf said. Staff employees made the necessary repairs, and subsequent testing found water to be at safe levels, she said.

However, facilities workers

Turn to LEAD, Page A7

Lead: Test results ongoing at other schools in the district

Continued from Page A1

did not inform district leaders about the elevated levels until Wednesday through Friday of last week, Delf said. Asked why district leaders weren't informed earlier, Delf said employees considered the testing and repairs to be routine.

Nonetheless, district leaders last week decided that further precautionary steps needed to be taken, and so retesting was done at the same locations over the weekend, Delf said.

They also made the decisions to inform parents and to bring in bottled water, she said.

School board members were apprised of the situation on Monday, she said. District Superintendent Gustavo Balderas has been helping to address the matter but was unavailable for comment Monday night, Delf said.

The email to parents, and accompanying news release to media outlets, were distributed following a Monday evening inquiry by The Register-Guard-Herald. The district was already working to get the information out on Monday night prior to that inquiry, Delf said.

Test results are "rolling in" and it's possible that elevated levels of lead could be found at other schools in the district, Delf said. The school year ends for most district students a week from Thursday on June 16.

"We're not seeing systemwide or even buildingwide issues," Delf said. "But we don't consider this routine so we're establishing protocols."

The longer-range plan is to hire an independent firm to undertake a comprehensive, districtwide testing for lead over the summer, Delf said. All water faucets for drinking and food preparation will be tested, she said. The company, Eugene-based PPS Engineering + Environmental, will be paid about \$25,000, she said.

The district has done testing for lead in the past, including some sampling at every school in 1996.

Many district schools — including the ones that showed elevated levels — were built long before 1986, when lead in plumbing fixtures was banned, Delf noted.

The precise locations where elevated levels of lead were found earlier this spring include two drinking fountains near Room B-18 and in the choir room at Sheldon; a sink in a no-longer-used workshop at Kennedy; and a sink in the

Education Support Services Department at the Education Center.

An elevated level was found Monday at Roosevelt in a sink in a small office between Rooms D-3 and D-5. The second of two tests, however, found no elevated level.

Lead in water is a major health concern because high levels can result in serious injury or death. Pregnant women, infants and young children under age 6 can be especially susceptible.

In Portland, a city well-known for its green activism, media reports last week found that over half of 90 school sites tested between 2010 and 2012 had elevated levels of lead in the drinking water at some locations.

The report, based on a public records request by Willamette Week, landed during an emergency meeting already underway to discuss why the Portland Public Schools failed to disclose elevated lead levels at two schools for nearly two months — and left the taps running for days while it completed repairs.

That news, first reported by The Oregonian, had already galvanized parents and led to an online petition for the resignation of Superintendent Carole Smith.

The Portland district placed plastic bags over all water fountains districtwide on Friday and will spend the summer testing lead levels at all schools. The last time such extensive testing was done was 2001. The Portland district also has purchased nearly 1 million bottles of water for students through the end of the school year.

Two district employees could be placed on administrative leave as a result of an internal investigation into the matter, Superintendent Smith said.

In April, Gov. Kate Brown called for a statewide review of what tools schools and districts have to test water. She directed the Oregon Health Authority, which carries out Environmental Protection Agency water regulations at the state level, and the Oregon Department of Education to make recommendations for improvement.

Follow Jeff on Twitter @jeff_s_wright. Email: jeffwright@registerguard.com. The Associated Press contributed to this report.

View related documents at registerguard.com

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INBOX 744-7

LEAD IN SCHOOLS' WATER

Portland Public Schools Superintendent Carole Smith has an annual salary of \$247,000, and is so incompetent or uncaring that over a six-year period she cannot ask the staff she supposedly supervises to check on the safety of water at the schools one single time? ("Falling the Test," WW, June 1, 2016)

If she has any integrity, she would proceed to resign and turn down whatever severance she might have coming. She should be immediately terminated and a criminal investigation initiated.

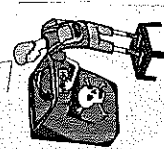
Schools are supposed to be about helping children grow in their intellectual development. However, Smith and her colleagues' inaction, indifference and incompetence may have permanently stunted the potential for full intellectual development in some of Portland's schoolchildren.

Instead, Smith's first public reaction is to book for someone to blame. Look in the mirror!
--"nicelibr"

PPS personnel's approach—testing for a well-known health threat and then doing nothing effective to mitigate—is official negligence and reckless disregard for the health and well-being of children.

What was the point of testing for lead levels if not to lower high lead levels?
--"NE Mom"

Well done, WW, on investigating this and giving parents at least a basic level of information. Thank you!
--"Civil Lynn"



Canby, OR
(Clackamas Co.)
Herald
(Cir. 2xW. 4,752)

JUN 8 2016

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Canby School District water supply tests show no significant lead levels

By DANIEL PEARSON
The Canby Herald

Results of water supply tests on all Canby School District (CSD) facilities show no elevated amounts of lead, copper or any other contaminant in school water supplies, according to documents obtained from the testing company, Portland-based Pixis Labs.

The Environmental Protection Agency created the "Lead and Copper Rule" in 1991, which established the action level for lead — the amount that can appear in water before it is unsafe for consumption — at 15 parts per billion.

Test results of CSD's water supply show that all district schools and facilities tested well below that threshold. It should be noted that not every single water fountain and sink was tested; the law does not require every single water source to be checked.

The testing was completed in May and while there are minute traces of contaminants in the water it is nearly undetectable and well within federal safety standards, according to a series of letters written in May to CSD by Dick Reid, project manager for Pixis Labs.

"This was all done appropriately and according to requirements," Reid told the Herald. "These are sparkling results."

Autumn Foster, CSD's communications coordinator, said the district did not receive any phone calls from concerned Canby parents after the news broke that many of the Portland School District's schools had tested for levels of lead way beyond the federal threshold of 15 parts per billion.

Foster provided a statement from CSD about the district's water testing requirements.

"The Canby School District is not required to test water quality in schools that are served by Canby Utility, however as a precaution, the district recently had water quality tested at four other buildings: Knight, Lee, Eedes and Ackerman. All reports came back negative for detectable levels of lead."

"CSD is responsible for testing the water quality at Carus and Ninety. One because they are on well systems," the statement continued. "Recent test results show the water at our rural schools is also safe."

Reid said Canby is a relatively new community and there are no big swings in the types of plumbing used in construction during the last 20-or-so years. He offered some advice for people who do live in older homes, or who work in older buildings, and may be concerned about lead plumbing.

See LEAD / Page 6

LEAD: Heavy metals leech out overnight

(Continued from page 1)

"One of the things people need to consider is, and this is the worst case scenario, water that's been sitting in the plumbing all night long, or for at least eight hours, that's when water leeches the heavy metals out," Reid said. "After you take out that first quart of water the quality gets better and better."

Reid said it's best to let water from any source run for a while. Reid said it's best to let water go for a while. "It's not a bad way to go for sure," he said. "As a matter of course I personally just let it run for a few seconds at least before taking a drink."

Local districts to check school water

BY JEREMY C. RUARK
The Clatskanie Chronicle

Concerns about the safety of the drinking water in Portland public schools have spread to Clatskanie County and triggered testing at local schools.

"Because of the situation in Portland public schools, we have reviewed our process and will be completing these tests in a timely manner," Clatskanie School Superintendent Lloyd Hartley said. "Our maintenance supervisor is working with the city to provide for these tests, hopefully within the month."

The Portland schools drinking water crisis unfolded in April following reports in media outlets of lead levels exceeding federal safety standards.

According to the World Health Organization, too much lead can damage various systems of the body including the nervous and reproductive systems, the kidneys, and it can cause high blood pressure and anemia. The lead can be found in lead piping.

The Portland public schools get water from the City of Portland through the Bull Run watershed. Several of the Portland schools turned off the fountains and began providing bottled water to the students pending further testing.

Hartley said while the Clatskanie District conducts the tests, the schools' drinking fountains

See WATER, Page A4

Water

From PAGE A1

would not be shut off but that the district would answer any student's concerns about drinking the water.

"Currently our drinking fountains are open and if a student wanted a bottle of water, we would give that to them," he said. "If they have any questions they are welcomed to come in and talk with me."

Hartley said the district has every reason to believe the drinking water at the schools is safe because it comes from the city.

"We will share the results of the tests once they are available," he said. Superintendent Michael Carter and his maintenance staff met on June 6 to review the drinking water

and increasing public

interest. "We knew this was going to be an issue," Carter said.

According to Carter, the Rainier District operates a 480-foot well for its school water and checks the system daily.

"We are in good shape," he said. "Look at our water ratings from the state and you will see that they are outstanding."

Carter said new fountains were also installed at the schools last year. The district also contracts with a commercial firm that cleans the water systems storage tanks every three years. He said the district spends from \$4,500 to \$7,000 for that service. The tank cleaning is planned for later this summer.

"We are on top of this," he said. "We feel very comfortable with our water; I even drink it."

Carter said Rainier is also keeping a close watch on the school's radon levels. High levels of radon, a

cancer-causing radioactive gas, have also been discovered at some Portland schools.

"We especially watch that and we currently have extremely low [radon] levels," he said.

Hardley said Clatskanie is not currently testing for radon.

St. Helens School Superintendent Scot Stockwell said testing for lead was conducted at the schools in 2008 without any concerns.

"Based on this information we will be testing in the summer," Stockwell said.

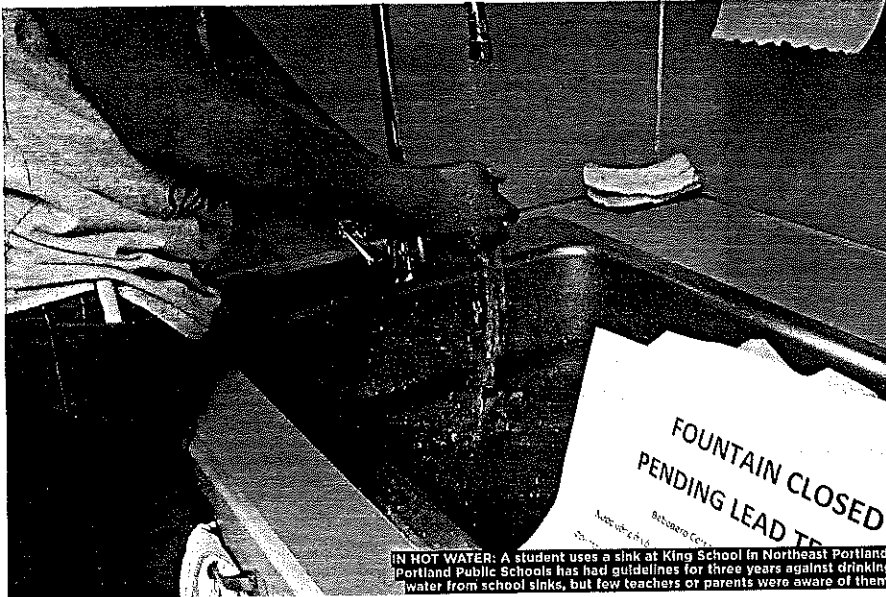
The Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority are assessing the lead in the drinking water in schools and expect to issue recommendations this summer.

Follow the latest developments about the local schools drinking water at thechronicleonline.com.

St. Helens, OR
(Columbia Co.)
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IN HOT WATER: A student uses a sink at King School in Northeast Portland. Portland Public Schools has had guidelines for three years against drinking water from school sinks, but few teachers or parents were aware of them.

That Sinking Feeling

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS DIDN'T WANT STUDENTS DRINKING OUT OF SINKS. BUT THE DISTRICT FAILED TO TELL PARENTS.

BY RACHEL MONAHAN rmonahan@week.com

For at least three years, Portland Public Schools has had a districtwide prohibition against drinking from school sinks to avoid water that might contain elevated levels of lead. Yet emails reviewed by *WW* show top school officials decided not to publicize the guideline, apparently preferring to let children drink contaminated water rather than alarm parents and teachers.

Last week, following *WW*'s revelation of elevated lead levels at dozens of Portland Public Schools buildings, school officials told parents the district has a guideline against drinking from school sinks.

Sinks may be less safe because many sinks were not tested for lead in 2001, when fountains were, documents show.

The prohibition came as a surprise to parents.

"That is unbelievable," says Beverly Cleary School parent Emily Petterson, whose child attends class in the Rose City Park building, where elevated lead readings were found this spring. "I am 100 percent sure that if teachers and staff had truly known, there is no way they would be letting our children fill their water bottles daily, and there is no way they would be filling their own coffee makers with that water."

Since at least 2012, when an extensive

round of lead tests was completed, the district has had the sink guideline in place, and yet a dozen parents and staff contacted by *WW* said they didn't know about it before this spring, if ever.

Wilson High School social studies teacher Hyung Nam says he didn't know about the guideline until this spring.

"They didn't give us any specific results," he said. "The effect is that all of us neglected it, didn't think it was a big deal."

The quiet sink prohibition is the latest example of the school district struggling under Superintendent Carole Smith to

in February 2015 in response to a public records request, yet until *WW* asked questions about the tests late last month, the district did not tell parents or teachers.

Smith has placed two top administrators on leave, but has struggled to explain which of the lead problems have been fixed.

The district declined to discuss the lead tests or its sink guideline with *WW*, saying through a spokeswoman that it won't discuss policies subject to the investigation by the law firm of Stoll Berne, which is expected to take 30 days.

"THEY WEREN'T DOING ANYTHING TO STOP IT."

—Standard Shaefer, PPS parent

communicate vital information, even when withholding it might compromise children's safety.

It follows furor over PPS's failure to disclose the results of lead tests that were apparently conducted between 2010 and 2012 at all but a few schools, serving kindergartners through high school seniors ("Failing the Test," *WW*, June 1, 2016). *WW* obtained a PPS document with results

"That's all part of the investigation," says PPS spokeswoman Courtney Westling. "Our hope is we are also going to get answers."

School Board Chairman Tom Koehler said he didn't know about the sink guideline until *WW* contacted him. "If we don't expect people to drink out of sinks, we better make that very clear and consistent in our communication," Koehler said.

Regardless of what the district's top officials did or did not know about test results from 2010 to 2012, they decided at least to write a guideline warning students and staff not to use sinks for drinking water.

"Portland Public Schools asks students and staff not to drink from the sinks in our classrooms," the guideline says on the district website.

The guideline notes that "If building staff 'flush' the sinks (letting the water run at the start of a day for approximately 10 minutes or until cold), then the faucet may be used for drinking water," but it doesn't make clear how students or teachers would know if that had been done.

The district's current daily task list for custodians includes a requirement to flush every fountain but not any sinks, according to a copy of the checklist shared with *WW*. If water sits in the pipes, it can pick up contaminants.

In environmentally friendly Portland, students carrying a reusable water bottle from home and refilling from the faucets at school is a common occurrence.

Emails reviewed by *WW* show top district officials in 2012 discussed placing warning labels on sinks across the district, but decided against it, fearing it would frighten parents.

On Oct. 24, 2012, PPS senior communications manager Erin Barnett sent an email to district officials, including then-facilities director Tony Magliano, discussing whether to place warning stickers on school sinks throughout the district.

Barnett wanted to know if the message could be scaled back.

"Can custodians have the lead test results and ONLY put stickers on sinks that really can't be used for drinking water?" emailed Barnett. "How do we avoid undue alarm among staff and parents?" (The district declined to make Barnett available for comment on this story.)

PPS ultimately placed warning stickers at Higler School in Northeast Portland—but not across the district.

Magliano, who became the district's chief operating officer until he was placed on paid leave June 2, admitted to *WW* that the district failed to sufficiently warn teachers and parents, noting there has been a notice on the PPS website "for ages."

But before Smith placed him on leave last week, Magliano told *WW* the district should be "marking every freaking sink" until the message was clear. "If we're not going to make sinks lead-free, they need to be posted clearly not to drink from," he said June 1.

Parents are now outraged that their children have been drinking from the sinks for three years after the district created a guideline against it. They say the district still hasn't done enough to stop drinking from sinks—even after taping off water fountains May 27.

"Yesterday, they weren't doing anything to stop it," said Standard Shaefer, father to a Beverly Cleary fifth-grader, speaking after water fountains at the school were taped off but sinks were unattended. "There's access to them." **WW**

Schools cautious after lead reports

744-7



Roosevelt Middle School Principal Chris Mitchell radios for another jug of water Tuesday as students move from class to class after elevated traces of lead were found Monday in a school woodshop sink.

cautionary measures to ensure its students have access to filtered water. The steps were taken after the district informed parents and students Monday night that some drinking fountains and sinks at the three schools, as well as one sink at the district's administrative offices, had tested positive for elevated levels of lead.

By ALISHA ROEMELING
The Register-Guard

Students at Roosevelt Middle School lined up during a five-minute break between classes Tuesday morning to fill paper cups with water from a 5-gallon tank of filtered water after all school drinking fountains were shut off Monday afternoon. Roosevelt, in south Eugene, is one of three Eugene School District schools that have taken pre-

Turn to WATER, Page A6

Continued from Page A1

three locales and receiving found that lead levels in the water was at safe levels, district officials said. District leaders said they decided to be more cautious about the April test results from facilities staff employees only last week. Roosevelt officials made aware of the crisis Monday afternoon, said he immediately had all school drinking fountains shut off and went out to get more filtered water around 1:30 p.m.

"I moved the staff water cooler into the hallway to get away from the street and get about 300 bottles of water," Mitchell said. Mitchell also delivered an intercom announcement Monday afternoon to students on Tuesday morning.

"I told them this (not using the fountains) is a precautionary measure," Mitchell said. "I don't think there's a lot of concern. I think the kids understand that we need to be cautious and that they're commendable with that."

Sheldon Principal Bob Bolder was unable to be reached for comment Monday. District Superintendent Charlie Smith referred the Register-Guard's request for comment to Henry Delf, the district's superintendent.

The standard for "safe" amounts of lead in the water is 15 parts per billion, or PPB. Anything above that is considered to be a health concern, according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

The higher level found in spot checks at Eugene High School, Kennedy Middle School and Roosevelt High School is 22.7 PPB in one fountain, 15 PPB in second fountain, Kennedy Middle School, 15.8 PPB in a woodshop sink, Roosevelt Middle School, 21.6 PPB in first sampling of second fountain, Roosevelt Middle School, 20.3 PPB in second sampling after flushing and 15.3 PPB in sink.

Federal definition of elevated levels: 15 PPB and above.

While district facilities workers made the announcement, Delf said they failed to adequately inform district leaders about the elevated levels about the elevated levels in a meeting with Superintendent Gustavo Balderra last week.

Balderra was copied on an email from Mitchell Monday afternoon, when a facilities staff member at another district employee referred Mitchell to another district employee at the district's central office, Balderra, Delf said.

Delf said the oversight was "a monumental error" anywhere along the way to not properly communicate anything, Delf said. "I just didn't come to the meeting and I didn't know what was going on."

Delf said the district is moving to establish proper communication with parents and the public. "We're now establishing proper protocols, Delf said, to communicate all of this information of right steps and do the right thing for students and staff, and we need to have clear steps to address the communication with the public."

Balderra said on Tuesday that he wants to hold a community meeting for parents to discuss the delay in addressing the matter, but no date has been set, but the meeting could happen as early as next week. Eugene School Board Chairman Alan Meeks said he learned about the issue in an email that Balderra sent after district officials employees received test re-

Water: District planning to have community meeting

Robert P. Fisher, 16, said the situation is "a little alarming because of the summer weather." Delf said. All water food preparation will be done in the district's kitchen in Springfield.

Delf said the district is out for summer testing as soon as school starts in August. "We believe there are more susceptible to lead," Delf said.

"This will allow the professionals to access our water sources better to ensure the most accurate testing," McGilivray said.

During the summer, the district plans to hire an independent firm to test water.

Facilities employees tested about 220 water sites throughout the district in 1999, which is why the district was notified of elevated lead levels in some water sources, Delf said.

The district is testing all schools in the district each morning, as well as in pipes and fixtures. "We are more susceptible to lead," Delf said.

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AGENDA 2016
Better leadership in education

744-7

A long overdue lead-testing requirement for districts

Oregon lawmakers want to mandate that school districts test their water — but that won't remedy failures in leadership

Portland Public Schools may have done the entire state a favor with its inept response to the discovery of lead-contaminated water in school drinking fountains.

The outcry over the district's spotty testing history and its failure to notify the public helped highlight shortcomings that exist statewide. As The Oregonian/OregonLive's Noelle Crombie reported, no one requires school districts in Oregon to test water for lead, despite the

Editorial fact that lead can impair brain development and is not known to be safe in any concentration in the blood. Districts also are not obligated to share those results with the public nor are they directed to turn off access to lead-contaminated water when it's discovered, Crombie writes.

Legislators, including Sen. Michael Dembrow and Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, are aiming to change that. The two Portland Democrats successfully pushed through a bill in 2015 that requires schools to test for radon. Now, they are envisioning something roughly similar for the 2017 session, Dembrow told The Oregonian/OregonLive editorial board.

It's a reasonable ask. In fact, it's so reasonable that Dembrow assumed there already was such a state requirement when he and Keny-Guyer developed their 2015 legislation. They targeted radon in part because the public isn't particularly familiar with the cancer-causing radioactive gas, he said. Lead, unfortunately,



BETH NAKAMURA/STAFF

Portland Public Schools held a community meeting last week at Creston School in Southeast Portland to address the discovery of lead in the drinking water.

appears to have escaped such coordinated attention because its presence and threat to human health are so well-known.

Dembrow said the lead bill would have both a testing and a reporting component,

members. The radon law also requires testing every 10 years.

Lead poses a few more challenges, however, both in terms of the immediacy of the threat and the higher costs of remediating contamination. Dembrow said he would like to explore whether the state can help provide funding to districts for lead testing and response.

While that's understandable, legislators should also recognize that basic maintenance is a core responsibility of each school district. The lack of a state mandate should not relieve them of common-sense testing and monitoring in older schools that are likely to have lead fixtures in plumbing. Lawmakers should train their focus on a bill of basics that can pass quickly and provide the issue with the urgency that, unfortunately, Portland Public Schools failed to show.

While legislators won't even submit their draft proposals until September for consideration next year, school districts don't have to wait. Day care providers would also be smart to similarly check their systems, even if legislation does not cover their operations.

One thing that a state mandate won't fix, however, is cavalier attitudes toward serving the basic needs of students, teachers and staff. That's a responsibility of the administration and school board of each district and is the biggest shortcoming that the lead crisis in Portland Public Schools has exposed.

— The Oregonian/OregonLive editorial board

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DEVELOPMENTS | School lead screening

No children tested positive for elevated lead in their system during a screening for nearly 300 children at Creston Elementary in Southeast Portland on Tuesday. Multnomah County health officials reported. **744-7**

Students at Creston were exposed to high levels of lead in drinking water at the school this year, prompting the large screening for elevated lead levels.

Screening for 239 children Monday at Rose City Park School revealed two of them had elevated lead levels, requiring further diagnostic testing.

Portland Superintendent Carole Smith put two of the district's top facilities and safety officials on paid leave, saying lead testing results had been bungled.

— Betsy Hammond

Schools say water is safe, plan tests to assure anxious parents

Region on alert after Portland schools did not reveal that old pipes contained lead

By KEVIN HARDEN and RAYMOND RENDLEMAN
Pamplin Media Group

Most Portland-area schools say their water is safe, but only a handful of districts around the region have routinely tested for lead and other contaminants.

A Pamplin Media Group survey found that very few schools in five counties surrounding Portland have tested for lead in drinking water during the past year. A couple of districts have tested school water in the past two or more years. And most are scrambling to assure parents that school water is safe as the issue has riled anger among Portland Public Schools parents.

In some cases, Portland-area school districts say water used by their schools is routinely tested by cities and water districts and found to be safe, but with few exceptions, a large number of schools outside Portland were built decades ago when lead pipes were used.

The North Clackamas School District says water used in its schools is considered safe by Environmental Protection Agency standards. The district also plans to test again in 2002 and plans to test again "during the next several weeks" based on the concerns expressed in the community and not in response to any government regulation, district officials said.

If elevated lead levels are identified, the district will immediately not allow the water to be consumed and provide a safe water alternative. Once the source of lead contamination



A drinking fountain at Jesse City Park School in Portland has been closed because elevated levels of lead were found in some schools' water. Districts around Portland are also testing their water to make sure it is safe.

"The district will be following EPA-recommended guidelines for testing of lead in drinking water."

— Bob Stewart, Gladstone School District superintendent

"We need to know"

Portland Public Schools officials have faced angry parents and shouted criticism during the past week as information trickled out about the discovery more than four years ago of elevated levels of lead in water used by at least four dozen schools. The federal Environmental Protection Agency says lead in water greater than 15 parts per billion is dangerous. In some cases, according to media reports, water tested at Portland schools exceeded that level.

Lead can cause long-term health problems in children and adults. Many school buildings constructed before the late 1970s could have water running through lead pipes. In some cases, buildings continued to use the more durable lead pipes well into the mid-1980s.

In response, the Portland district has turned off water to all its elementary schools and stacked cases of bottled water in the buildings for children and staff.

The district also has hired Portland law firm Stoll Berne to

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Lead testing: Schools across region responding to concerns

From Page 1

investigated the district's system to response to lead in the water and complete a personnel review. Two staff members — Chief Operating Officer Tony Magliano and Senior Manager for Health and Safety Andy Friday — were placed on paid administrative leave during the month-long investigation.

"We need to know — and the public deserves to know — what happened and how the accurate information about the health and safety of our schools was not immediately available leading to legitimate concerns about lead in our water," said Board Chair Tom Koehler in a June 2 news release. "We need to know if we have the right protocols in place and where we need to make improvements. We also need to know if there are personnel issues that resulted in this delay of information."

City water considered safe

Other districts in the region are pushing to assure parents their water is safe. The David Douglas School District sent a letter to parents saying it was pulling together data and preparing a more detailed report to be released by (June 6).

Three years ago, the district tested lead levels in all school building water, and found that the 15 parts per billion level "specific water sources" exceeded in 11 buildings. Those sources were immediately shut off. Sources that have not since been re-piped remain shut off, according to the district.

"Most buildings had just a few fixtures showing elevated lead levels," the district wrote. "Buildings with specific sources showing elevated lead levels during initial testing were Cherry Park Elementary, Earl Boyles Elementary, Gilbert Park Elementary, Lincoln Park Elementary, West

68 years ago, with none of the buildings showing elevated levels of lead (nearly all showed no trace of lead in their water). The district plans to test water in all its buildings during the summer.

Nearly two dozen of the district's buildings were constructed before 1986.

Powellhurst Elementary, Ventura Park Elementary, North Powellhurst, Alice Ott Middle School and David Douglas High School.

The district is using bottled drinking water in the buildings. "The remaining buildings have either since been re-piped or they have an adequate number of water sources that do not show elevated lead levels," according to the district.

In Lake Oswego, the school district issued a June 1 statement saying water provided by the city of Lake Oswego and local water districts was safe.

"Given the concerns raised by the water quality issues that have come to light in Portland Public Schools, independent representative sample testing at all Lake Oswego School District facilities will be conducted beginning this week (June 1)," district officials wrote. "We expect to have testing results available within the next three weeks."

Lake Oswego school officials said Alex's Analytical Laboratory would do the testing. The district also fielded calls and e-mails from anxious parents mid-week as news stories broke about the lead levels found in Portland Public Schools.

Many of the district's buildings were constructed in the 1950s and '60s. Two schools were built in the late 1940s.

Voluntary testing becomes norm

The Tigard-Tualatin School District has tested since 2013 eight schools built before 1986 (the last year lead pipes were used in public buildings). The district found no elevated levels of lead in the schools.

Forest Grove schools also plan to test for elevated lead levels during the summer break. The district tested water at Gales Creek School and Nell Armstrong Middle School in 2008 and 2009 and found no elevated levels of lead or other con-

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Dallas schools test for lead in water, radon in air to increase safety of kids

744-7
By **Julene Guzman**
The Itemizer-Observer



DALLAS — Drinking fountains and kitchen taps in all six Dallas School District schools will be tested for lead contamination this week.

Each facility will have 20 drinking fountains, taps and classroom fountains tested based on the amount of use and suspected condition of the pipes at some locations.

Facilities Director Kevin Montague said the tests are in response to concerns about the handling of positive lead tests in Portland Public Schools.

Like many school districts across the state, Dallas has not tested fountains and taps at its schools regularly. There hasn't been a requirement for schools to do so, Montague said.

In 2013, the district tested

water had been running for 30 seconds and no lead was detected.

A follow-up test conducted in March of 2013 also found no contamination. Tests at Whitworth, Morrison and another classroom at Lyle were added as a precaution, and no other taps tested positive.

This week's testing is likely to be the new normal for the district as Montague anticipates regular testing will become a requirement soon.

"Really it makes sense. We test our fire systems every year, so we should," he said. "We should be doing our due diligence on that."

The tests will cost the district more than \$2,000, and that is with a discount labs are giving schools to conduct tests in the wake of findings in Portland.

Test results should be available within a couple

weeks, though they may be delayed due to the number of screenings being conducted now, Montague said.

Montague didn't speculate on what the tests would find, but did say that with buildings 60 or more years old, it is possible to have positive tests.

If that happens, the district will conduct additional tests and complete any necessary upgrades to eliminate the problem.

"We will follow up on any positive we get," Montague said.

The district will be conducting tests of a different type early next fall. Testing for radon, a radioactive gas that can cause lung cancer, is now a requirement for districts in Oregon.

Montague said "short-term testing" over two to seven days will take place in October at all schools. If any

of those test show results exceeding federal thresholds, long-term testing — up to nine months — will be conducted.

Dallas schools were tested in 2001 and the only "hot spots" were found in LaCreole Middle School. Subsequent tests revealed levels lower than the threshold.

Based on those tests and upgrades to heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems that circulate more outside air within the buildings, Montague doesn't believe radon will be an issue. If not, flushing radon out of the environment may require adjustments to air flow patterns.

"Most of it can be taken care of with HVAC tweaks," he said.

Results from initial radon testing should return in December.

744-7

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FOCUS ON | Gresham-Barlow School District

Two Gresham-Barlow schools have potentially elevated levels of lead in drinking water, the district announced Wednesday.

744-7
Tests indicate lead levels above the federal action level in a total of eight fixtures at Dexter McCarty Middle and Powell Valley Elementary schools, according to the district. The fixtures — five at Dexter McCarty, three at Powell Valley — are shut off until the problem is taken care of, the district said.

They will also be subjected to a follow-up test. The district said Wednesday it has received test results from only five of its 18 schools.

The district didn't release the specific lead levels found at the schools. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's action level for lead is 15 parts per billion.

The fixtures that returned potentially elevated levels of lead in drinking water at Dexter McCarty are in the school's kitchen; Room 35, a special education classroom; and Room 37, a functional skills classroom.

The Powell Valley Elementary fixtures are in the school's kitchen and a reading intervention classroom.

— Jim Ryan, Betsy Hammond
and Brad Schmidt

Portland, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
The Oregonian
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PPS safety chief was wrong on water lead

By Betsy Hammond
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Portland Public Schools' senior manager for environmental health and safety, Andy Fridley, resisted testing school water quality and spread false information about the safety of drinking water in schools, emails show.

Fridley was the point person charged with protecting students and employees in Oregon's largest school district from environmental hazards for two years. Superintendent Carole Smith put him on paid leave June 2 because of his role in the district's much-criticized response to high lead levels at two schools.

The school district on Wednesday released hundreds of pages of emails Portland Public Schools released Wednesday, received by online at bit.ly/22RVfyp.

regarding lead in school water. Fridley's emails to parents, colleagues and bosses portray him as misinformed about water quality regulations and equipment as well as resistant to efforts to measure and improve water quality. They show he mocked a parent who expressed concern about lead levels 10 or 2 milligrams below the federal action level as "zero lead in water lady."

Among Fridley's incorrect assertions:

There was "no plan or need"
See Lead, A4

Lead

Continued from Page 1A

to retest water fountains or sinks in at least one school that showed acceptable lead levels 15 years ago. If contaminants such as lead and copper "are not present in the initial testing," he wrote to a concerned parent at Creston Elementary in February, "there is no reason to believe they will be in the future." Creston was one of two schools found to have elevated levels of lead in water fixtures this year.

No test results in the past few years indicated high lead levels in Portland schools. "Where we have spot tested at other schools," he told the Creston parent, "we have found lead levels at or below" results from systemwide testing in 2001. In fact, 157 drinking fountains and sinks in 51 schools and Head Start centers recorded lead levels above the federal action level since 2009.

The water filters the district deploys are effective against lead. The district in fact uses filters that improve the look and smell of water, not to reduce lead below the federal action level. As recently as May 24, the day before parents were notified of high lead levels at Rose City Park School and Creston, Fridley insisted to the district's spokeswoman and to his boss that the filters are "effective at reducing or eliminating lead to meet (Environmental Protection Agency) Standards."

Fridley could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

Results not shared

Portland Public Schools on March 31 received results of tests at the two schools showing lead levels as much as twice the federal action level. Fridley did not order the water at those fixtures shut off and didn't request that alternate sources of clean drinking water be brought in.

The emails suggest Fridley's direct supervisor,

David Hobbs, senior director of facilities and assets management, did not share Fridley's view that all drinking water in Portland schools is safe.

In an email about priorities for the district's next school bond, intended to be put before voters in the fall, Hobbs called for spending \$7 million on "re-piping 15 priority schools to address lead pipes and water contamination," which he called "a major safety hazard for drinking water."

Hobbs is the highest-ranking Portland Public Schools official shown by the email records to have been told of the high lead levels found at Rose City Park almost as soon as the results came in. He apparently did not share that information up the chain of command.

More than four weeks later Hobbs' boss, Chief Operating Officer Tony Magliano, asked Fridley about the Rose City Park water tests: "Did we get the results back?"

None of the emails appear to indicate Smith knew of the positive tests for lead before May 25, the day she has said she found out about them and "immediately" began seeking more information and planning a response.

Smith's chief of staff, Amanda Whalen, learned in mid-March district officials planned to test for lead in the water at Rose City Park in response to a parent's concern and that results were expected by early April. She forwarded that email, without comment, to Smith.

Parent voiced concern

Fridley chose not to share the troubling test results with Rose City Park teachers and parents for many weeks, despite being urged to do so. The one Rose City Park parent who knew those results because she was the one who insisted the water be tested, wrote to the administrators overseeing the school on April 11. She said she felt compelled to tell others about the lead but thought it would be better if school district official delivered that message.

Lead

Continued from Page 1A

lab Corp. OHA will collect results and make them available to the public in an online database.

"These steps will help schools and child care programs keep harmful levels of lead out of their fountains, taps and sinks," OHA director Lynne Saxton said in a statement. "In addition, the plan will give families, school staff and community members more transparent, accurate and readily accessible information about lead testing results."

There are 197 school districts with about 1,200 public schools in Oregon, according to ODE. The state licenses 1,000 certified child care centers,

350 certified family child care homes, and 4,000 registered family child care homes. Laboratories charge about \$20 to \$30 to analyze each sample, although some offer bulk discounts to schools, Co-wie said. The Salem-Keizer School District announced last week that it would test taps at all 65 of its schools this year.

The district is awaiting test results taken over the weekend at Salem Heights Elementary after officials found a 2001 document showing a high lead level was found there. District spokesman Jay Remy said the district since has found documents showing that levels were acceptable in later tests. tlowe@statesjournal.com, 503-399-8779 or [follow at Twitter.com/T-Loey](https://twitter.com/Twitter.com/T-Loey)

Officials: Test schools' taps for lead

OHA, ODE to work with school districts

TRACY LOEW
STATESMAN JOURNAL
744-7

Oregon health and education officials are urging schools and childcare programs statewide to test their drinking water for lead this summer. The move comes as school districts

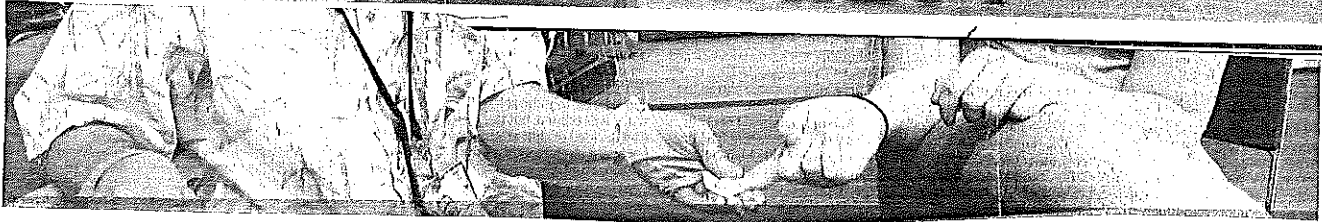
around the country — including in Portland, Beaverton and Eugene — are discovering hazardous lead levels at the tap. "Children are especially susceptible to lead exposure because their bodies absorb metals at higher rates than adults," Gov. Kate Brown said in a statement. "In addition, schools are not included when water systems test for lead as required by the Environmental Protection Agency, meaning that a water system may be deemed to have safe lead levels overall,

district superintendents and facilities managers to discuss the recommendations and provide technical support. The agencies are recommending that schools and childcare centers test all taps used for drinking or food preparation and use an OHA-accredited laboratory to analyze the samples. There are 24 accredited drinking water laboratories in the state that perform public testing, including Salem's Water-

See LEAD, Page 2A

Casey Parks, Brad Schmidt and Molly Harbarger contributed to this report.

LEAD TEST ANXIETY



THEME PHOTO: JONATHAN HOUSE
Jeff Strong of the Multnomah County Health Department gets ready to draw blood from ACESS Academy eighth-grader Maura Kelley to test for lead.

Revelations of lead in drinking water spurs rush to test across the region

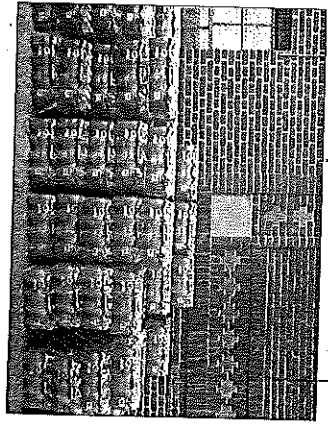
Pamplin Media Group staff
Concern is mounting about lead-tainted water throughout the Portland area.

Thousands of lead residents have asked for kits to test their homes' water. Portland city officials plan to test water this year in a dozen buildings the city owns or leases, after elevated levels of lead turned up in water at the Multnomah Arts Center, the Children's Museum and Patten Community Center.

The Port of Portland, which operates Portland International and two other regional airports, says it plans to soon test for lead and other contaminants in water at its facilities — and other public buildings — and other public facilities — constructed before the late-1970s could have water running through lead pipes.

See LEAD, Page 2

TRIBUTE PHOTO: JONATHAN HOUSE
Portland school students are now quenching their thirst at stacks of bottles like these.



ages beginning May 29, the Leadline has received more than 2,000 requests for test kits.

Outside Portland a Pamplin Media Group survey found more than a dozen school districts are trying to assure parents their water is safe, even though only a handful have routinely tested for lead and other contaminants in buildings' water.

Elevated levels of lead in drinking water can cause serious health problems. The federal Environmental Protection Agency says lead in water greater than 15 parts per billion is dangerous. Lead can cause long-term health problems in children and adults. Many school buildings — and other public facilities — constructed before the late-1970s could have water running through lead pipes.

Portland, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
Telephone: (503) 281-1800
(City: 281-1800)
JUN 9 2015
Allen's P.O. Box 1088

Lead:

From page 1

In Beaverton, one of the state's largest districts, water was shut off to five older elementary schools last week as a precaution, before it tests water in all district buildings during the summer.

All this was spurred by recent revelations that some Portland Public Schools buildings had elevated levels of lead in their water.

Early test results

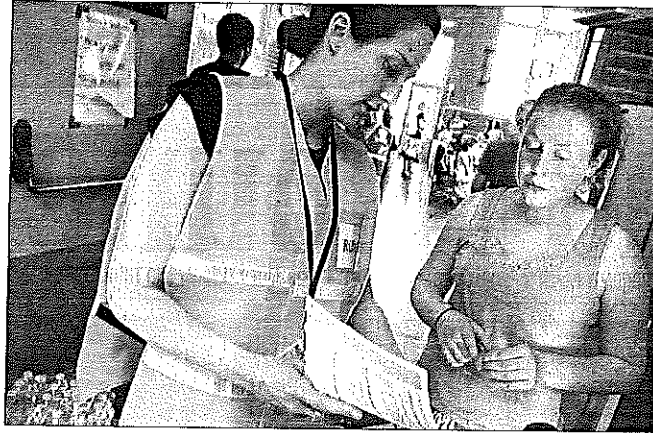
So far, however, only a few children have been found with elevated levels of lead in their blood. Multnomah County health officials tested 225 children and adults for lead poisoning Monday afternoon at Rose City Park School. Two children had blood lead levels that require more tests to confirm possible lead poisoning, health officials said.

The county set up a testing clinic at Rose City Park School so children and parents could be tested after elevated levels of lead were found in the school's water. A second clinic tested children and adults Tuesday afternoon at Creston K-8 School.

In mid-May, after concerns about air emissions from two Portland glass plants, county officials tested 192 adults and children for lead poisoning. None of those tested had abnormal levels of lead in their blood.

Water shut off to old buildings

Pamplin Media Group reporters found a couple of area districts have tested school water in the past two or more years. In other communities, water used by their schools is routinely tested by cities and water districts



TRIBUTE PHOTO: JONATHAN HOUSE
Doctor Erica Moseson goes over Maura Kelley's test results for lead poisoning and gives her the good news that she passed with no issues.

and found to be safe.

The David Douglas School District released data Tuesday on lead in its water.

Three years ago, the district tested lead levels in all school buildings' water, and found that "specific water sources" exceeded the 15 parts per billion level in 11 buildings.

"Most buildings had just a few fixtures showing elevated lead levels," district officials wrote to parents.

The district is using bottled drinking water in Gilbert Park and North Powellhurst schools.

"The remaining buildings have either since been re-piped, or they have an adequate number of water sources that do not show elevated lead levels," the district reported.

In Lake Oswego, the school district issued a June 1 statement saying water provided by the city of Lake Oswego and local water districts was safe.

"Given the concerns raised by the water quality issues that have come to light in Portland Public Schools, independent representative sample testing at all Lake Oswego School District facilities will be conducted beginning this week," district officials wrote. "We expect to have testing results available within the next three weeks."

Alexin Analytical Laboratories will do the testing. The Lake Oswego district fielded calls and emails from anxious parents as news stories broke about the lead levels found in Portland Public Schools.

Many of the Lake Oswego district's buildings were constructed in the 1950s and '60s. Two schools were built in the late-1940s.

Beaverton School District shut off water to Elmonica, Eryol Hassell, Greenway, Hazeldale and Rock Creek schools, primarily because the buildings had water systems installed before a 1986 lead ban and could have copper pipes with lead solder.

Spokeswoman Maureen Wheeler said there's no evidence so far that the schools' water was tainted, but the district decided to shut off the supply based on the age of plumbing pipes and components.

All district facilities will be tested for lead and other contaminants in the water during

the next few months, officials announced June 2.

Testing did uncover elevated lead levels in some samples taken in May from Highland Park Middle School, where students and staff also are drinking bottled water until pipes can be replaced in 2017.

Testing during the summer

The North Clackamas School District says water used in its schools is considered safe. The district tested for lead levels in schools in 2002, and plans to test again "during the next several weeks," according to district officials.

Since 2013, the Tigard-Tualatin School District has tested eight schools built before 1986 (the last year lead pipes were used in public buildings). The district found no elevated levels of lead in the schools.

Oregon City's school district plans to test its schools during the summer for lead levels in the water. That report should be available in the fall, according to the district.

Forest Grove schools also plan to test for elevated lead levels during the summer break. The district tested water at Gales Creek School and Neil Armstrong Middle School in 2008 and 2009 and found no elevated levels of lead or other contaminants.

The district's 2010 bond measure included replacing water lines to most of the schools. Eight of the district's schools and facilities built before 1986 have been renovated or improved in the past 20 years, according to district officials.

Hillsboro schools were tested six years ago, with none of the buildings showing elevated levels of lead (nearly all showed no

trace of lead in their water). The district plans to test water in all its buildings during the summer.

Nearly two dozen of the district's buildings were constructed before 1986. The oldest, Reedville School, was constructed in 1922.

Sherwood schools began testing the water in its buildings this week.

Tests in Canby schools last month found that none of the district's schools showed elevated levels of lead in the water.

Newberg schools tested for lead in 2005 and found only trace amounts. The district plans to test all its schools again this summer.

St. Helens schools have installed water filters in their buildings and plan to test for lead levels in the next few weeks.

Recent tests found the water safe at the schools in the Centennial School District.

Gresham-Barlow and Reynolds school districts are about to test the water available in their schools.

"In light of concerns raised in other school districts in Oregon, the Gresham-Barlow School District is voluntarily testing for lead in the drinking water in all of the district's schools," Athena Vadnais, director of communications, said in a statement.

The Gresham-Barlow district expects to have test results ready by June 10.

"The Reynolds district is also voluntarily testing drinking water for lead in all of our schools," said Andrea Watson, director of communications.

Additional reporting by Kevin Harden, Shasta Kearns Moore, Eric Apalategui and Teresa Carson.

Allen's

Drinking water shut off at five more schools

Many students and staff will drink bottled water pending lead test results
7/14/17

By ERIC APLANT/STAFF THE TIMES

The Beaverton School District turned off the drinking fountains inside the older elementary schools late last week as a precaution even before tests determine whether any more of its buildings have lead-tainted water.

Water testing will begin soon at all schools and other facilities district-wide, and the results will dictate whether further steps will be needed to keep students and staff safe, district spokeswoman Megan Wheeler said.

"At this time, we do not expect any other schools to be shut off," she said. The elementary schools here the drinking water is being replaced with bottled water are Elmwood, D'Ignoli Hall, Greenwood, Hazledale and See WATER, Page A11

Water: Pre-1986 schools' pipes may be the source

From Page A1

Rock Creek

Those five schools have water systems whose construction dates before a 1986 lead ban and have copper pipes, and potentially lead solder. They were identified as potential lead sources in its buildings in response to increased awareness about lead in drinking water.

In each case, they turned off all standard drinking fountains and put warning signs on combined faucet-drinking fountain fixtures located in some classrooms. Additionally, the district is providing bottled water dispensers in all classrooms, gyms, cafeterias and other areas around the school buildings.

Local water providers conduct regular water tests and their systems have been shown to deliver water without elevated amounts of lead, but the metal can enter the drinking water through older pipes belonging to customers, such as those inside aging school buildings where lead testing is not required.

Wheeler said district officials didn't have evidence that there are elevated lead levels in the drinking water at any of these elementary schools but made the decision to shut off the supply based on the age of the buildings' plumbing pipes and components.

Previous testing did uncover elevated lead levels from two drinking fountains (but not all samples) taken in May at Highland Park Middle School, where students and staff also are drinking bottled water until its pipes can be replaced in 2017.

As an extra safety measure, all district facilities, including these schools, will be systematically tested for lead in the water over the coming few weeks. Wheeler announced last week.

Tests will be conducted at every drinking fountain and faucet — including kitchens — in all Beaverton schools and facilities across the district.

It could take another two weeks after collection before test results come in and can be shared, Wheeler said. A district safety committee

authorized the district-wide water testing back on May 13 and the district signed a contract with a testing company on Friday.

The district shared more plans last week as the issue of potentially toxic levels of lead in drinking water kept washing across the national headlines, including the highly publicized case from Flint, Mich.

Portland Public Schools has drawn intense criticism after prior water testing had detected worrisome levels of lead in some school water systems but only recently came to light. The district also has added a water quality page to its website that links to various resources and will offer updates on water testing results and responses.

But the majority of schools receive water from municipal systems. These schools aren't monitored for lead in the water beyond the testing done by the municipal network.

That can be a problem because many older schools have pipes that can leach lead into the water at the site.

"There's growing concerns in the school districts, and we just wanted to do what we could to get information out on best practices," said Amy Wojcicki, spokeswoman for the Oregon Department of Education.

Lead-testing plan advances as state teams with school districts

The Associated Press

PORTLAND — Oregon health and education officials said Wednesday they will team up with school districts and licensed childcare programs statewide to facilitate testing for lead in school drinking water over the summer.

The plan responds to a directive from Gov. Kate Brown in April and comes on the heels of belated disclosures about lead in the drinking water of some Portland Public Schools.

In March, the district arranged to test for lead at

two schools at the request of parents who were concerned about the unfolding public health crisis in Flint, Michigan.

Those tests revealed elevated levels of lead in 14 of 92 water sources at the schools, including a handful of drinking fountains, but parents were not told for weeks.

That disclosure has motivated other school districts around the state to test their water for lead, which is a neurotoxin.

The Oregon Department of Education, the Oregon Health Authority and the state's Early Learning Division will provide technical support and information for the state's 197 school districts and recommend a list of state-certified labs to test the water.

The plan also calls for those labs to report results to the Oregon Health Authority, which will build a database for public use this fall, said Robb Cowie, an OHA spokesman.

The announcement is a recommendation only, however, and the state can't require school districts to test. Currently, districts that have their own water supply are monitored by the state health officials for lead in the water.

Oregon wants to test all schools for lead

Astoria, Seaside and Warrenton will check water

Associated Press and staff reports

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Astoria Superintendent Craig Hoppes said the district is voluntarily testing the water at its four schools, but waiting to get the testing materials. While it normally takes a couple weeks to get the rules for testing, Hoppes said, he is hearing of a large backlog because so many schools are testing for lead.

Seaside Superintendent Doug Dougherty said his district is also testing and that results will be available in July or August at the latest. Warrenton-Hammond Superintendent Mark Jeffrey said his district is preparing to test for lead within two weeks.

Lead: Announcement is a recommendation only

Continued from Page 1A

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"There's growing concerns in the school districts and we just wanted to do what we could to get information out on best practices," said Amy Wojcicki, spokeswoman for the Oregon Department of Education.

Edward Stratton contributed to this report. 744-7

PLUS

Eugene students drink filtered water after lead concerns close fountains

By Alisha Roemeling
The (Eugene) Register-Guard

EUGENE — Students at Roosevelt Middle School lined up during a five-minute break between classes Tuesday morning to fill paper cups with water from a 5-gallon tank of filtered water after all school drinking fountains were shut off Monday afternoon.

Roosevelt, in south Eugene, is one of three Eugene School District schools that have taken precautionary measures to ensure its students have access to filtered water dispensers and bottled water. The steps were taken after the district informed parents and students Monday night that some drinking fountains and sinks at the three schools, as well as one sink at the district's administrative offices, had tested positive for elevated levels of lead.

The other two schools were Sheldon High and Kennedy Middle. The elevated level at Roosevelt was discovered Monday; the elevated levels at the other three district buildings were discovered in April. Plumbing fixtures were replaced at those three locales, and retesting found that lead content in the water was at safe levels, district officials said.

District leaders said they decided to be more proactive after learning about the April test results from facilities staff employees only last week.

Roosevelt Principal Chris Mitchell, made aware of the concerns Monday afternoon, said he immediately had all school drinking fountains shut off and went out to get some clean water around 1:30 p.m.

"I moved the staff water cooler into the hallway and went down the street to Hagen (grocery store) and got about 300 bottles of water," Mitchell said.

Mitchell also delivered an intercom announcement to all Roosevelt students on Tuesday.

"I told them this (not using the fountains) is a precautionary measure," Mitchell said. "There doesn't seem to be a lot of concern. I think the kids understand that we think they've been safe, and they're comfortable with that."

Lead levels

The standard for "safe" amounts of lead in the water is 15 parts per billion, or PPB. Anything above that number is considered to be elevated, according to the federal Environmental Protection

Agency

The highest level found in spot checks at Eugene district schools was 22.7 PPB at a water fountain at Sheldon High School.

By way of contrast, traces of lead at two Portland School District schools found in testing earlier this spring were as high as 52 PPB — more than three times the EPA's "action level" of 15 PPB.

In Eugene, water fixtures that contained traces of lead, including sink and fountain fittings, were replaced at Kennedy and Sheldon almost immediately after district facilities employees received test results on April 14, district spokeswoman Kerry Delf said.

While district facilities workers made the necessary adjustments to alleviate the issue in April, Delf said they failed to adequately inform district leaders about the elevated levels until it was brought up in a meeting with Superintendent Gustavo Balderas late last week.

Balderas was copied on an earlier email, from a facilities staff member to another district employee, that referenced "pretty far down" in the email the discovery of traces of lead at the district schools. But that reference was missed by Balderas, Delf said.

Delf said the oversight was not intentional.

"There was no intent anywhere along the way to not properly communicate anything," Delf said. "It just didn't come to the awareness of the people who need to know until last week."

Delf said the district is moving to establish proper ways for staff to communicate issues to other staff members and the public.

"We're now establishing proper protocols," Delf said. "The intention of all of this is to take the right steps and do the right thing for students and staff, and we need to have clear (steps) to adequately communicate with the public."

Balderas said he wants to hold a community meeting for parents and others to address the matter further. No date has been set, but the meeting could happen as early as next week, he said.

School board response

Eugene School Board Chairwoman Anne Marie Lewis said she learned about the issue in an email that Balderas sent to her on Friday.

"I think the district has done a really good job of

keeping us informed and being proactive on this," Lewis said Tuesday. "It's not widespread, it's slightly elevated, it's not in every school, and I think the district is taking all the right steps to test and make corrections and inform the public."

Delf said communication about the traces of lead "did not happen as quickly as we would have liked, but it will in the future." No disciplinary action has been taken against any employee in regard to the matter, she said.

Facilities employees tested about 230 water sites throughout the district in 1998, which is when Roosevelt, Kennedy, Sheldon and the district office were originally determined to have had elevated levels of lead in some water sources, Delf said.

The proper equipment was replaced at that time, but Delf said the district decided to retest the same sites this spring, following up on a request made by Balderas.

Delf said the district also was responding to community concerns following the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, where much of the city's water was found to be contaminated with dangerous levels of lead.

What students say

On their lunch break Tuesday, some Sheldon High students said they are concerned, not so much about the delay in learning about the elevated levels but rather that such levels could occur.

"We heard about it this morning from a teacher who told us not to drink from any of the fountains, just to be safe," said 15-year-old Makena Buchholz. "But I'm just going to bring (my own) water bottle."

Ryan Poulter, 16, said the situation is especially frustrating because of the recent warm weather.

"This is like the worst time of year that this could happen," Poulter said. "It's so hot. I think it's pretty concerning, and people are definitely talking about it."

District officials said Monday that the four affected sites will receive bottled or filtered water until school is out for summer on June 16.

Janitors also are flushing out water sources at all schools in the district each morning, as water that remains in pipes and fixtures overnight are more susceptible to heightened traces of lead, Delf said.

During the summer, the district plans to hire an inde-

pendent firm to undertake a comprehensive, districtwide testing for lead in the water supply, Delf said. All water faucets for drinking and food preparation will be tested, she said. The company, Eugene-based PBS Engineering + Environmental, will be paid about \$25,000, she said.

The Springfield School District and the Bethel School District in west Eugene both aim to do the same in coming months.

The Bethel district "has already hired an independent professional environmental service to begin testing as soon as school is out for summer," district spokesman Pat McGillivray said in an email.

"This will allow the professionals to access our water sources without interruption in order to ensure the most accurate testing," McGillivray said. "Rather than random sampling, our tests will be conducted on all potential sources of drinking water in every building, leaving no room for doubt."

In Springfield, district spokeswoman Jen McCulley said tests were conducted throughout the district in 2002 "and the levels were all well below the tolerated level."

McCulley said parents, students and staff were notified Tuesday that the district plans to test all its sites again beginning the week of June 20.

Based on previous tests, the district does not believe there are elevated levels of lead in any of its water supply, McCulley said.

"We don't have any locations we believe are problematic," she said. "We want to make sure that everyone has access to clean water."

State advances plan to test all Oregon schools for lead

But the majority of schools receive water from municipal systems. These schools aren't monitored for lead in the water beyond the testing done by the municipal network.

That can be a problem because many older schools have pipes that can leach lead into the water at the site.

"There's growing concerns in the school districts and we just wanted to do what we could to get information out on best practices," said Amy Wojcicki, spokeswoman for the Oregon Department of Education.

The Bethel district "has already hired an independent professional environmental service to begin testing as soon as school is out for summer," district spokesman Pat McGillivray said in an email.

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Ontario, OR
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MORE COVERAGE ON PAGE A11:
Portland Schools emails shed more light on district's response.
Eugene students switch to filtered water as precautionary measure.
Gresham schools show elevated levels of lead in water.

Districts will pay for school lead tests

Three big local districts will hire Eugene labs and foot the bills without state help

By ALYSSA KONKAWNE
The Register-Guard
744-7

The Eugene, Springfield and Bethel school districts will tap money from their general funds to pay for comprehensive testing this summer for lead levels in their buildings' drinking water.

Officials at the three districts said they began preparing for the tests even before state health and education officials announced a plan earlier this week to encourage school districts across the state to do comprehensive testing over the summer.

The state's plan is a recommendation, not an order, and does not include any allocation of state funds to help with the cost of testing. Oregon Health Authority spokesman Robb Covey confirmed. The Eugene district and the Bethel district in west Eugene plan to hire Eugene-based PWS

Turn to WATER, Page B2

Water: Testing to start after school year ends

Continued from Page B1

Engineering + Environment) to conduct their testing at estimated costs of \$25,000 and \$10,000, respectively.

The Eugene district announced early this week that slightly elevated levels of lead had been found in late March and early April at two water fountains at Sheldon High School and in two sinks, one at Kennedy Middle School and another at the district's Education Center. Keppens were made and re-testing found lead traces to be at safe levels.

A sink at Roosevelt Middle School also was found to have a slightly elevated level of lead earlier this week.

As a precaution, district officials are providing bottled or filtered water at the affected schools, though the school year, which will end Thursday.

The Eugene district expects to receive the results of testing and address any issues that are found before school resumes in the fall, spokeswoman Kerry Bell said.

The last comprehensive testing in the Eugene district took place in 1998.

In the Bethel district, spokesman Pat McCallivray said the district hopes to begin testing water sources on June 20.

"Our desire is to test as soon as school is out," McCallivray said. "It could take two weeks of samples are gathered to receive the results."

"Rather than random sampling, our tests will be conducted on all potential sources of drinking water in every building, leaving no room for doubt," he said.

Springfield district spokeswoman Jan McCullley said Analytical Laboratory Group from Eugene will do the testing at Springfield schools. McCullley did not have a total cost estimate but said the testing will be \$25 per individual test.

"We will be testing all district-owned facilities and following the recommendations of the company to ensure all water is free of contaminants," she said.

The last time the Springfield district conducted comprehensive tests for traces of lead in drinking water was in 2002.

The plan announced by state officials responds to a directive from Gov. Kate Brown in April and comes on the heels of heated discussions about lead in the drinking water of some Portland public schools.

As part of the state plan, the Oregon Health Authority, Department of Education and Early Learning Division will provide technical support and information for the state's 197 school districts and recommend a list of state-certified labs to test the water.

The state plan also calls for those labs to report results to the Oregon Health Authority, which will build a database for public use this fall, Covey said.

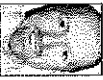
Follow Alyssa on Twitter @alysa_konkawne or Email alyssa.konkawne@registerguard.com.

Schools working on lead test plan

By Chris Collins
collins@bakerherald.com

The Baker School District has joined others throughout the state in devising a plan to ensure that the water delivered to students and staff inside school buildings doesn't contain harmful levels of lead.

Doug Dalton, the district's chief financial officer, said today that the district plans to begin testing its water systems soon for lead content.



Dalton

"We're taking a proactive approach similar to what we've done in other issues," Dalton said. "We're going to be testing all our schools to get some baseline data points to understand where we are."

Dalton said the district's response to the issue of lead in water at the schools will be handled in much the same way as when cryptosporidium was found in the city's water system in the summer of 2013. The district installed an ultraviolet disinfecting system at each building before school started that fall to ensure water flowing into the buildings was not contaminated with cryptosporidium.

See Lead, Page 2A

LEAD

Continued from Page 1A

Hundreds of people became ill that summer and city residents boiled their water during the outbreak.

The city installed a temporary ultraviolet system in March 2014 and a permanent system was installed in November of that year.

The city has worked to ensure that its water supply is safe up to the point that it is delivered to customers and the school district's ultraviolet system takes it from there, Dalton said.

Unlike crypto and other organic contaminants, lead frequently comes not from the

public water source but rather from lead pipes or lead solder.

That's one reason the city, as required by federal law, tests water for lead at individual homes rather than before the water enters the distribution system.

In 2014, when the city tested water at 20 randomly chosen homes, no lead was detected. The next series of tests are scheduled for June 2017.

Because the lead source often is within buildings, Dalton said school officials are "analyzing the quality of the fixtures and the plumbing to ensure we have safe drinking water."

Water quality issues such as cryptosporidium have

been a higher priority as public officials work to ensure water is safe to drink, Dalton said. Recent findings in the Portland and Eugene school districts, where lead levels in some drinking fountains and faucets exceeds the level that the federal government considers safe, have brought the lead issue to the forefront in Oregon.

"It was something down on our radar screen," Dalton said.

In April, Gov. Kate Brown directed the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Education to address the issue of lead in school water, an OHA press release stated.

Although the state agencies

recommend schools test their water for lead, tests are not legally required, nor are schools mandated to correct problems found through testing. Recommended actions included in the governor's directive are:

- Identifying the sources of lead.
 - Stopping access at sites found to have more than 20 parts per billion of lead.
 - Reporting results to the community.
 - Fixing the problems.
- "We're going to continue to be proactive to keep students and staff safe and to have a good educational learning environment," Dalton said.

SKSD water to be tested for lead

Salmon-Kelzer School District parents and staff received a letter from Superintendent Christy Perry last week informing them that all schools will be tested for lead in the water.

Since nearly all of the Salmon-Kelzer schools are exempt from mandatory water testing because they are served by city water systems which test the water before it is distributed to the community, including the schools, the testing by the district is voluntary.

"In light of events in other states as well as other communities in Oregon, we have decided to voluntarily test all of our schools for lead in the water," Perry wrote. "This will be a major project and will take some time to complete."

After tests in March showed unsafe levels of lead in the drinking water, Portland is providing their 49,000 students at 78 schools with bottled water and shut down drinking fountains.

The first round of testing in Salmon-Kelzer is hoped to be completed this summer. The order of testing may be based on the schools that would take the most time and effort to fix safe drinking water are first, Perry wrote. "Our concern is that all schools be tested this summer as a person will be allowed to from farmers that are found to contain unsafe lead levels."

Keizer, OR
(Morton Co.)
Kelzer Times
(Circ. W. 2,320)

Grants Pass, OR
(Joshephine Co.)
Daily courier
(Cir. D. 11,580)

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Testing for lead wise investment for local schools

The disastrous situation with the municipal water supply in Flint, Mich., has let others nationwide to pause and ask themselves about the safety of their own drinking water. In Oregon, testing has already exposed elevated levels of lead in the water at public schools in Portland, Beaverton and Eugene.

Once testing takes place on a more widespread basis, it is likely that many more schools will test positive for unacceptably high levels of lead, a neurotoxin that is especially harmful to young children because it can cause developmental and learning problems.

In the vast majority of cases in which lead is detected, the problem is not with the source of the water. Municipal water systems routinely conduct tests for lead and other contaminants. In rural areas, well-testing is fairly common, although probably not as frequent or as thorough as at water plants that serve entire cities.

The problem, however, is that water can be safe and pure when it enters a building, yet be contaminated by the time it finds its way to a drinking fountain or water glass. That's because many schools — and other public buildings, not to mention individual homes — have plumbing that includes lead elements. The vast majority of schools, homes and other buildings constructed prior to 1980 used lead solder to connect copper pipes.

Now, state education and health officials are urging that all public schools and daycare centers in Oregon have their water tested while students are on break this summer.

It will be up to the schools to make this decision on their own, however, because the state lacks the authority to require schools to conduct such testing.

Furthermore, school officials should be open about the results of the testing. Given the age of most of the buildings in the Grants Pass, Three Rivers, Rogue River and Glendale school districts, it would be surprising if lead wasn't found in the water of at least some of the schools. Once those schools are identified, then work can begin to remedy the problem.

The issue isn't money. Testing by a professional laboratory generally costs less than \$50, although to be safe schools would probably want to test water from multiple spots in each building.

Still, if each school tested water from, say, four separate drinking fountains, that would amount to just \$200 per building. In the Grants Pass School District, for example, this would cost about \$2,000 for testing at all of its schools.

Clatskanie, OR
(Columbia Co.)
Chief
(Cir. W. 2,750)

JUN 10 2015
Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Local districts to check school water

perintendent Lloyd Hartley said. "Our maintenance supervisor is working with the city to provide for these tests, hopefully within the month."

The Portland schools drinking water crisis unfolded in April following reports in media outlets of lead levels exceeding federal safety standards.

According to the World Health Organization, too much lead can damage various systems of the body including the nervous and reproductive systems, the kidneys and it can cause high blood pressure and anemia. The lead can be found in lead piping.

The Portland public schools get water from the city of Portland through the Bull Run watershed. Several of the Portland schools turned off the fountains and began providing bottle water to the students pending further testing.

Hartley said while the Clatskanie district conducts the tests, the schools drinking fountains would not be shut off but that the district would answer any student's concerns about drinking the water.

"Currently our drinking fountains are open and if a student wanted a bottle of water, we would give that to them," he said. "If they have any questions they are welcomed to come in and talk with me."

Hartley said the district has every reason to believe the drinking water at the schools is safe because it comes from the city.

BY JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@courier-journal.com

Concerns about the safety of the drinking water in Portland public schools have spread to Columbia County and triggered testing at local schools.

"Because of the situation in Portland Public Schools, we have reviewed our process and will be completing these tests in a timely manner," Clatskanie School Su-

is not currently testing for radon.

The St. Helens School District receives its water from City of St. Helens, City of Columbia City and McNulty Water District.

Superintendent Scott Stockwell said testing for lead has been conducted at the schools since 2000 without any concerns.

"Based on the water testing history of the district, there appears to be no immediate danger as there may be in other districts," he said. "Regardless, in response to current concerns in other districts we have started the process of retesting our water to help assure the safety for students and community patrons. If we find concerns we will take immediate action and notify our community."

Stockwell said the district will post the water testing results at its website and send an electronic message to families.

Over the past few summers, the Rainier School

Cater said new four-gallon water systems were also installed at the schools last year. The district also contracts with a commercial firm that cleans the water systems storage tanks every three years. He said the district spends from \$4,500 to \$7,000 for that service. The tank cleaning is planned for later this summer.

"We are on top of this," he said. "We feel very comfortable with our water. I even drink it."

Carter said Rainier is also keeping a close watch on the school's radon levels. High levels of radon, a cancer-causing radioactive gas, have also been discovered at some Portland schools.

"We especially watch that and we currently have extremely low [radon] levels," he said.

Hartley said Clatskanie

District has added special filtered water fountains at water stations.

"These new fountains provide students with better tasting water and are designed to fill refillable water bottles helping the environment as well," Stockwell said.

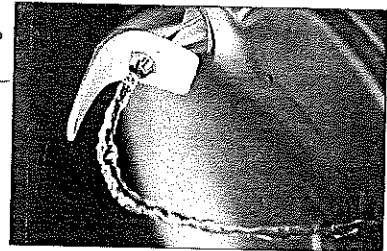
In addition, Stockwell said the district is currently working on a plan that will comply with Oregon requirements concerning the testing of radon at the schools.

"The plan will be submitted to the Oregon Health Authority before the September deadline," he said.

The Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority are assessing the lead in the drinking water in schools and expect to issue recommendations this summer.

Follow the latest developments about the local school drinking water at thechiefnews.com.

744-7



Courtesy photo
Clatskanie, Rainier and St. Helens school districts are testing for lead in the schools drinking water systems.

JUN 10 2016

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VIEWPOINT

The Business Journal welcomes guests

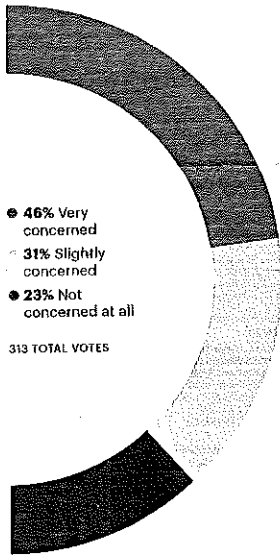
BUSINESS PULSE GET THE LEAD OUT

Portland Public Schools will test the water at every school this summer after previous tests showed unsafe levels of lead at two locations. Parents are upset that the district waited eight weeks to reveal news about lead levels that were twice as high as the EPA's "action level."

WE ASKED

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU ABOUT LEAD IN PORTLAND'S WATER?

YOU ANSWERED



THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Should a judge force the U.S. government to pay Moda and other health insurers under Obamacare?

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Grants Pass School District testing water for lead

By Alex Madison
of the Daily Courier

In the wake of elevated lead levels found in many Portland public schools, what are the Grants Pass and Three Rivers school districts doing to make sure your children's drinking water is safe?

Sherry Ely, business director for the Grants Pass School District, said periodic testing was conducted in the past if a parent or staff member had concerns. Ely said the results of every test was found to be in

compliance with Environmental Protection Agency lead and copper standards.

On the heels of the Portland lead discovery, however, the school district is working with the Grants Pass Water Lab, a state certified testing lab, to test the district's water. Samples from every school in the district were collected and lab results are expected to arrive next week.

results take about three to five days to be completed.

The testing is mostly voluntary. According to the Oregon Health Authority, schools and child care programs are not subject to testing unless a school district maintains its own water supply. For schools such as Grants Pass that get water from a municipal or community water source, the decision to test for lead and copper

is left entirely to the school districts.

It's up to the local school districts if they test, where they test, how frequently, and what they do with those results," said Robb Cowie, communications director for OHA.

Currently, the Grants Pass School District sources its water from the city of Grants Pass with the exception of South Middle School, Allen Dale

Elementary, and Redwood Elementary, where water is sourced from private wells.

The Three Rivers School District on the other hand sources water from private wells at all schools in the district. Wells are tested every three years per federal regulations at the Grants Pass Water Lab.

According to Three Rivers Superintendent David Holmes, all but two schools within the district were tested in 2014.

Turn to LEAD, page 8A

Grants Pass, OR
(Josephine Co.)
Daily courier
(Circ. D. 11,580)

JUN 10 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Lead

From Page 1A

The two remaining sites are scheduled for testing in the summer of 2017.

"We follow all state requirements on testing. We've got established wells that have been tested on a regular basis for years," Holmes said. "The tests have always come back well within the EPA levels. We've never had any concern based on any test that have ever been run."

About 20 years ago, a handful of schools within the Three Rivers district

in schools after elevated levels of lead were found in 14 of 92 water sources at Portland Public Schools, including a handful of drinking fountains.

The governor's directive includes the participation of the Oregon Department of Education and the OHA. Both agencies will work collaboratively with school districts and child care programs to test drinking water over the summer. The agencies will provide information

and technical support.

Lead is a neurotoxin which children are especially susceptible to because their bodies absorb metals at higher rates than adults.

The Oregonian newspaper reported Wednesday that the senior Portland Public Schools manager was put on paid leave because of his role in the district's much-criticized response to high lead levels found at two schools. The manager resisted testing school

water quality and gave false information about the safety of drinking water in schools.

Also this week, school district officials in the Portland suburb of Gresham said elevated lead levels were found at two schools after recent drinking water tests.

Reach reporter Alex Madison at 541-474-3718 or amadison@thedaily-courier.com

SCHOOL DISTRICTS ORDER LEAD TESTING FOR WATER

Public concern, heightened interest prompt testing not previously completed in Scappoose and St. Helens school buildings

By NICOLE THILL
The Spotlight

The St. Helens and Scappoose school districts have ordered a series of water quality tests to detect high levels of lead and copper in the district buildings after heightened concern about poor water quality in Portland Public Schools.

In Scappoose and St. Helens, Superintendent Stephen Jipe and St. Helens Superintendent St. Stockwell, respectively, ordered lead testing to be conducted in the districts' buildings as soon as possible.

On Friday, June 3, Stockwell said testing in St. Helens would likely be completed over the summer since school will be out of session within the week.

"In light of the PPS water concerns, we will be testing our water throughout the district," Stockwell said in an email last week.

On Tuesday, June 7, Jipe said the Scappoose School District's facilities manager had already taken samples to the lab to be tested.

"I think [it's] this concept of, what you know, when you know. As soon as we know there was a generalized issue in older buildings, older water quality, we got on it," Jipe said Thursday.

By Thursday, results from the 20 sites tested in the Scappoose School District revealed detectable lead levels in a sink and drinking fountain at the high school, but the levels were below the Environmental Protection Agency's allowable limit of 15 parts per billion.

Until now, neither school district had conducted water quality testing on a regular basis inside the districts' buildings. Representatives from the school districts indicated in April, when the Spotlight previously reported on water

quality testing in the area, that the school districts primarily get water from their respective city water systems, and rely on regular quality tests conducted by city officials.

The St. Helens School District provided documents Wednesday, June 7, that show water quality tests were conducted in 2001 and every year from 2005 to 2008 in 14 different locations, but no further testing was conducted.

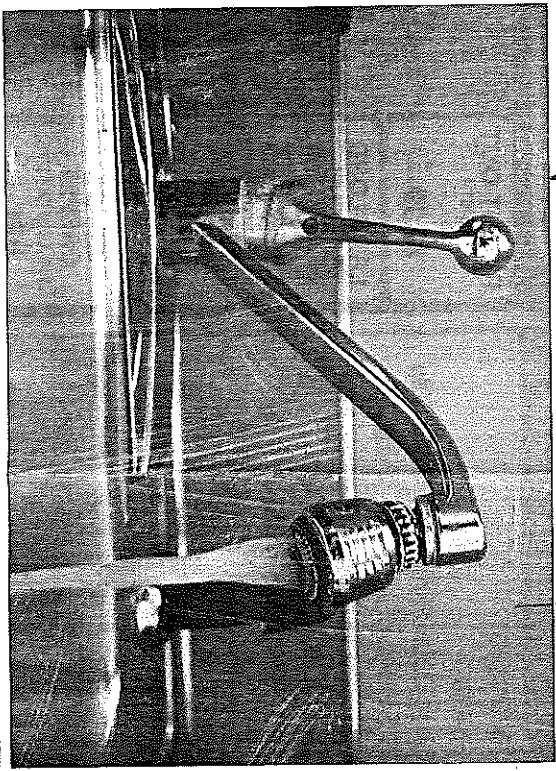
Jipe said no previous water quality tests had been conducted in the Scappoose School District.

"If you ask the question, why hadn't we tested before this point, well, until this became a public health concern, a lot of us have lived with lead, and extensive use in the course of our lives, [and] because the municipal water supply was clean, then we assumed that that was

"In light of the PPS water concerns, we will be testing our water throughout the district."

— Scott Stockwell, Superintendent, St. Helens School District

See LEAD/ Page A1



SCOTT FROM ILLUSTRATIONS, NICOLE THILL

Most public schools get their water from municipal water suppliers. While cities are required to regularly test water for lead and copper at specific sites, school districts are not required to do so unless they operate their own wells or water supplies.

Scappoose, OR
(Columbia Co.)
The Spotlight
(Circ. W. 3,410)

JUN 10 2016

Gresham, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
Outlook
(Circ. 2XW. 7,434)

JUN 10 2016

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Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Lead: Low levels recorded

From Page A1

In light of news out of Portland Public Schools that tests revealed high lead concentrations in several buildings greater than the 15 parts per billion action level set by the EPA, and did not repair the contaminated sources, both St. Helens and Scappoose school officials opted to conduct testing independently.

As a district, we're obviously interested in student and staff safety, Jipe said.

City water testing standards

City water testing is conducted annually in St. Helens and Scappoose by city staff and the results are published in consumer reports. Water is tested at specific locations during each testing cycle and the number of sites is determined by the population served. The location of the test sites are determined by certain criteria, according to David Leland, manager of drinking water services for the Oregon Drinking Water Protection Program.

Homes built before 1985 that have copper plumbing, lead service lines or lead solder at plumbing joints are generally targeted first, Leland explained.

However, none of those test sites include school buildings. A survey of school buildings in both school districts shows that at least 13 buildings were built before 1985.

While a specific test site might show no detectable levels of lead or copper in the water, water with a certain acidity comes into contact with older pipes. It can cause lead and copper to leach into the water supply, meaning the pipes and fixtures leading into buildings are the cause of concern, not the water alone, Leland explained.

Jipe expressed a similar sentiment.

"The issue is the water supply. The municipal water supply may be clean and may be relatively low lead, but in a large building and in an older building... that clearly doesn't guarantee that what comes out the other end of the tap is lead-free," Jipe said.

Despite acknowledging the concern that clean city water doesn't necessarily mean clean water in older school buildings, Jipe said the district never thought it was necessary to test the water.

"Because this is really a concept that didn't occur to us, I think, and certainly didn't occur to me until I suddenly realized some of these other districts — and I only realized it once they had been big publicity about that — that they're finding issues and they're having issues, then we should find out," Jipe said.

While the EPA requires public water systems

to regularly test water samples and provide consumer confidence reports, Leland explained that school districts aren't required to test school sites specifically unless they have their own water system, which roughly 100 schools in Oregon do, he said.

Scappoose Adventist School, a private K-6 in Columbia County is one of those schools. The single-building K-6 school operates on a well that also services the Scappoose Adventist Church building. In December 2014, the school reported lead levels of 30 parts per billion in one faucet, which was the result of faulty testing methods.

Sauvie Island Academy also operates on a private well and has its water systems tested regularly. The most recent test in July 2014 indicated levels of 2.9 parts per billion, significantly below the EPA action level.

Danger of high lead water and what to do

According to the EPA, high levels of exposure to lead can cause, "damage to the brain, red blood cells, and kidneys [and] exposure to even low levels of lead can cause low IQ, hearing impairment, reduced attention span, and poor classroom performance."

Leland said the recommendations flushing water systems in buildings or homes built before 1985 when the water has been sitting stagnant for a long period of time. Letting cool water run through the pipes before consuming it, he said, can help flush out stagnant water that may have a higher concentration of lead in it due to prolonged exposure.

Public communication to come

Both school districts said they have not taken any additional precautionary measures to prevent students or staff from drinking water at the schools and will likely wait for test results before taking action.

Records of the water testing results in the St. Helens School District are expected to be posted on the district's website by the end of the week, Stockwell said. In Scappoose, Jipe said he plans to distribute information to parents within the next few weeks.

On Wednesday, the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Education released a recommendation for school districts across the state to test for lead in their water systems over the summer. The agencies announced they will work with school districts and day care facilities over the summer to develop a statewide plan to test water.

There is no requirement, however, for districts to comply with the recommendation, and no state funding has been allocated to testing costs.

Lead found in water at two Gresham schools

Early tests show issues at Powell Valley Middle, Dexter McCarty Elementary

By THERESA GARNON
The Outlook

Tests of water in two of the 18 schools in The Gresham-Barlow School District showed potentially elevated levels of lead, and the water will be tested again, the district announced.

Three fixtures at Powell Valley Elementary School and five at Dexter McCarty Middle School showing higher than recommended levels of lead will be retested, the district said. Voluntary tests at other schools returned no worrisome results.

Schools across the metropolitan area are testing water for lead after a classroom erupted in Portland when it was revealed that Portland Public Schools had found high levels of lead in water in several schools and did not inform parents or staff or shut down the water sources.

High levels of lead in the body can cause neurological problems, and children are especially vulnerable.

See LEAD/ Page A5

Lead: Reynolds district also testing water

From Page A1

for lead testing. Under that protocol, testing drinking water quality is a two-step process that starts with sample-testing lead accumulation in stagnant water. If the sample test shows potential elevated levels of lead, above 15 parts per billion, those fixtures are immediately shut off. The fixtures then undergo a follow-up test.

District officials said the problematic fixtures will remain shut off until they are fixed. Other sources of water are being used until the problems are resolved.

At Powell Valley, built in 1962, the district tested 29 fixtures, and three of them in the reading intervention classroom and the kitchen had high levels of lead. At Dexter McCarty, built in 1968, 19 fixtures were tested. Five fixtures in room 35, a special education classroom; room 37, a functional skills classroom; and the kitchen were above 15 parts per billion. Pipes in older buildings are

more likely to have lead issues. The district declined to provide specific numbers for the eight problem spigots.

"We will release this information once we have the data from all of 18 of our schools for this first set of testing," Athena Vadnais, director of communications and community engagement said in an email.

The district said it will post water testing results for all schools at gresham.k12.or.us, as they become available.

Most public schools get their water from municipal water suppliers. While cities are required to regularly test water for lead and copper at specific sites, school districts are not required to do so unless they operate their own wells or water supplies.

744-7
Lead,

radon

tests

planned

Mid-valley school districts to examine water quality

JENNIFER MOODY
Albany Democrat-Herald

Reports of elevated levels of lead and radon in the drinking water and classrooms of some Portland schools have prompted mid-valley districts to plan tests of their own.

Gov. Kate Brown has issued a directive to the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority to review water quality in schools and develop recommendations and technical support to schools and child care programs.

Albany schools already do annual water tests at Tangent, Fir Grove and Clover Ridge because those schools are on wells, Superintendent Jim Golden said.

However, he told the Albany School Board on Monday, the district plans to test all buildings once classes dismiss next week.

"We were already planning to test all schools for radon this summer and we will also test water quality for all of our schools," he told the Democrat-Herald.

The Corvallis School District announced Tuesday night that it was working with a consultant to develop a plan to do water quality testing at all of its schools this summer. The district's announcement said

Tests

rooms in 26 schools with radon levels above the 4.0 level, although lower than 10, according to a memo to the district's board of education.

Albany last tested for radon in 2001, following a similar radon scare in Portland, and found elevated levels in just one room: the library of Oak Grove School.

Tests found 6.7 picocuries per liter of an initially and 6.0 picocuries about a month later. District officials shut off exhaust fans, closed room doors, opened air dampers and blew outside air into the library to increase air pressure and block radon from rising.

Two Albany schools — Clover Ridge and Tangent — tested positive for slightly lead levels in late 1999. The district turned off drinking fountains, provided bottled water and flushed the systems daily until pipes could be replaced the following year.

Lead tests are done regularly at the schools on wells, and in spot checks when people have concerns, said Doug Pignam, Albany's director of facilities. No elevated levels have been found.

Lead can enter drinking water when pipes that contain lead become corroded. Structures built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures and solder.

Pignam noted the Albany district has undergone several plumbing retrofits with tests found 121 class-

its most recent bond measure, which helps reduce the risk.

Lebanon, Harrisburg, Scio, Central Linn and Sweet Home school districts say they will be developing plans for radon tests this summer.

Some districts, like Albany, already test for lead because their schools depend on wells.

That's the case for Sweet Home, said Kevin Strong, the district's business director. Tests for lead are conducted every three years at Holley Elementary, Crawfordville, which houses Head Start and the Linn Benton Lincoln Education Service District's early intervention program; and Pleasant Valley, which houses Little Promises Child Care. Those tests have come back with either undetectable lead levels or levels well below 15 parts.

Sweet Home Charter School performs its own tests and last checked in 2013, Strong said. Those levels also were below 15 parts.

Strong said sample collection bottles are on order and will be used to test water at the high school, junior high, Hawthorne, Foster and Oak schools.

All Lebanon schools on wells also are tested on a regular basis, said Bo Yates, assistant superintendent. Radon testing plans are in the works for this summer.

Reporter Anthony Rihel contributed to this story.

Eugene, OR
(Lane Co.)
Eugene Register Guard
(Circ. D. 51,890)

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Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

More high lead levels discovered

Drinking fountain tests at Kennedy Middle School revealed the findings

By ALISHA ROEMELING
The Register-Guard

Elevated levels of lead were found in three more drinking fountains at Kennedy Middle School following testing at the school this week, district officials said Friday afternoon.

District spokeswoman Kerry Deif said a drinking fountain in the library of the middle school contained high levels of lead — 122 parts per billion (PPB) — following the first sampling. After the water was flushed, there were no detectable traces of lead in the library fountain, Deif said.

The standard for "safe" amounts of lead in the water is 20 PPB. Anything above that number is considered to be elevated, according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

A second fountain located in the H locker bay at the school had initial lead levels of 31.5 PPB. After flushing the water through the system, lead levels reached 4.3 PPB, Deif said.

Water in one other drinking fountain in the G locker bay also had elevated lead levels. The first test indicated levels of 120 PPB. After flushing it was 22.7 PPB.

District staff tested a total of 14 fixtures that provide drinking water at Kennedy

Eugene, OR
(Lane Co.)
Eugene Register Guard
(Circ. D. 51,890)

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Getting the lead out

Excess of caution justified in local schools

The horror story in Flint, Mich., where corner-cutting officials switched to a different municipal water source whose chemistry caused elevated levels of lead in the city's drinking water, has focused national attention on the problem of exposure to lead, especially among children. The discovery that the drinking water in some Portland schools contained lead, a rather unacceptable delay, brought the problem home to Oregon. Local school districts now plan to conduct water-testing programs over the summer, in line with state recommendations issued in the wake of the problems in Portland. Other districts throughout Oregon should do the same, despite the fact that the state is providing no financial support for the tests. In most cases, the tests will remove a potential cause of anxiety. In a few cases, problems will be discovered and corrected.

After Flint and Portland, any school that doesn't attempt to identify and address lead contamination is taking foolish legal and public health risks. The cost of testing will be a small price to pay.

Water has been shut off to the four sites and replaced with filtered and bottled water. The district plans to complete comprehensive lead testing over the summer, Deif said Monday. The district plans to share results of the testing at its parent and students drinking fountains and sinks at Roosevelt Middle School, Kennedy Middle School and Sheldon High School, as well as one-shik of the district's administrative offices, had tested positive for elevated levels of lead between April and

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Lead: Testing to conclude this summer, district says

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Follow Alisha on Twitter @alisharoemling. Email: alisha.roemling@registerguard.com. 744-7

David Douglas lead testing from 2013-14 just released

By Talia Richman
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Once the test results arrived in Krista Dennis' mailbox, the David Douglas School District parent pored over them late into the night. **744-7**

Eleven of the district's buildings showed water with lead higher than federal standards, according to samples from the 2013-14 school year.

Dennis and other members of a citizens committee had asked for the testing after learning the east Portland district — which serves nearly 11,000 students — last checked its water in 2001. Affected water sources were immediately shut off and bottled water brought in for some schools. Eventually, some schools had pipes replaced.

"They were on it as soon as they knew," said Dennis, the mother of a second-grader at Earl Boyles Elementary and facilitator of the school's Parents United Group.

But while Dennis received a copy of results starting in 2013, many David Douglas parents had no idea their children had potentially been exposed to unsafe levels of lead. At least not until this month.

After outcry over lead at Portland Public Schools pushed the issue into the spotlight, David Douglas released a statement on its website June 2 detailing lead levels and the steps the district has taken to address them starting in 2013. The district later published test results for each school in a news release and posted them on Facebook and Twitter on

Tuesday. It marked the district's first community "mass alert," spokesman Dan McCue said. And it came just after The Oregonian/OregonLive contacted David Douglas and other local districts to ask about lead testing.

Anne Bedney, whose son is a freshman at David Douglas High School, said Wednesday she is "angry and utterly disappointed" she wasn't told sooner. Her son attended middle school at Alice Ott, where tests in 2013 and 2014 revealed lead levels as high as 36 parts per billion. The federal action level is 15 parts per billion.

"Lead is an obvious hazard to kids' developing brains, and as a parent, that's something I need to know right away," said Bedney, who plans to have her son tested this weekend. "It's upsetting to know that this had taken place while he was there and that I didn't find out about it until Monday."

Problem fixtures

While some parents thanked the district for its transparency, the results have raised fresh concerns.

At North Powellhurst School, which is used as a child care facility, one kitchen sink still in use showed lead levels exceeding 2,000 parts per billion in January 2014. Instead of shutting off the fixture, the district has instructed staff to run water through it for one minute in the morning before use, in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards. Officials made that decision

Vancouver school

School district officials say tests of drinking water at Image Elementary in Vancouver have found elevated lead levels.

Evergreen School District officials said Thursday the levels range from 20 to 50 parts per billion, which is higher than state standards at 20 parts per billion and the federal limit of 15 parts per billion.

Drinking fountains at the school have been shut off and bottled water will be provided. Testing is underway at all the schools in the district and a second round of more stringent testing is happening at Image.

Because elevated lead levels may be in pipes or fixtures installed before 2001, the district as a precaution is providing bottled water to the following elementary schools built before that date: Burnt Bridge Creek, Burton, Ellsworth, Fircrest, Fisher's Landing, Harmony, Heartwood, Ilahaee, Marrior, Mill Plain, Pioneer, Riverview, Sifton, Silver Star and Sunset.

—Associated Press

after a follow-up sample — collected after cold water was run through the fixture — showed just 12 parts per billion. The sink is used only by staff, who've been given instructions, a spokesman said. Signs have also been posted.

The district also couldn't document steps it has taken to address problem fixtures.

Lead levels from two fixtures at Gilbert Park Elementary that tested at 35 and 17 parts per billion in 2013 dropped to 10 parts per billion after new samples were taken in May. The new results prompted officials to restore access to the fixtures, one of which is in the cafeteria.

Asked to explain those findings, McCue wrote in an email that officials couldn't find paperwork detailing repairs but that officials were "pretty

sure" the fixtures had been replaced.

"We had a former plumber who went around replacing fixtures, but who unfortunately did not always complete the work orders," McCue wrote. "But it's really the only possible explanation for why, when retested, they are now safe to use."

Results and remedies

McCue said notices about testing in 2013 and 2014 were sent to school board members, district employees and administrators. But parents were not emailed when the results came in.

"I don't think there's an expectation that schools do a mass communication," he said. McCue said in a later email the district was "focused on conducting the

tests, remediating any problems and putting into place longer term solutions."

"At no time did anyone even suggest keeping this information from anyone. Keep in mind this was three years before any of this was even being talked about," he wrote, alluding to attention on the issue following the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. "There was no intent to hide anything; we just didn't think to do it."

Nothing in state or federal law requires schools to test drinking water for lead, share test results or even take action — something state lawmakers are now looking to change.

Dennis said she isn't sure if David Douglas should have handled things differently. "It's hard to say if parents should have been notified. There are a lot of numbers attached to these tests that create confusion," she said. "As a parent, I want to say yes, but it also would've caused a lot more confusion and problems. ... If anybody had asked, they would've been able to let them know, but until Portland Public's numbers came out, nobody really paid attention."

Had parents asked her about the results, Dennis said she would have shared them.

"Nobody has asked me why they weren't notified," she said. "They were more concerned with, is it safe to drink now?"

In the newly released data from the 2013-14 school year, high lead levels turned up at Cherry Park Elementary, Earl Boyles Elementary, Gilbert

Heights Elementary, Gilbert Park Elementary, Menlo Park Elementary, West Powellhurst Elementary, Ventura Park Elementary, North Powellhurst, Alice Ott Middle School, Lincoln Park Elementary and David Douglas High School.

Some schools had only one or two affected fixtures that were immediately turned off, McCue said. Four of the more heavily affected sites — Menlo Park, Cherry Park, Ventura Park and the south campus of David Douglas High School — were re-piped in the summer of 2015. Re-piping efforts have cost almost \$1.5 million.

Five sites brought in bottled water after turning off several affected fixtures. Three were among the buildings that eventually received new piping. The other two, Gilbert Park and North Powellhurst, still provide bottled water.

A district committee in charge of recommending how bond money is spent met this week and discussed using some of the about \$2 million in remaining funds to look into re-piping at North Powellhurst and Gilbert Park.

"Getting our pipes in order and taking care of any lead problems is the highest priority," said committee chairman Mike Ewald, noting the committee will present the recommendation to the school board on Thursday. "Everyone understands the seriousness of getting our pipes fixed."

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(Multnomah Co.)
The Oregonian
(Circ. D. 247,833)

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Medford, OR
(Jackson Co.)
Medford Mail
(Circ. D. 51,500)

JUN 13 2015

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Grants Pass to test lead levels in schools

By Alex Madison
Grants Pass Daily Courier **744-7**

On the heels of elevated lead levels found in Portland schools, the Grants Pass School District is working with the state-certified Grants Pass Water Lab to test the district's water.

Samples from every school in the district were collected and lab results are expected to arrive next week.

"Because of issues and concerns in the Portland area, we thought it was prudent to do testing at all schools and are in the process of doing that now," Sherry Ely, business director for the Grants Pass School District, told the Daily Courier on Thursday. Ely said periodic testing was conducted in the past if a parent or staff member had concerns and that every test was found to be in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency lead and copper standards.

At the Grants Pass Water Lab, one water collection test costs \$35. Samples can be collected either by the lab or school districts themselves. Grants Pass collected its samples. Test results take about three to five days to be

completed.

The testing is mostly voluntary. According to the Oregon Health Authority, schools and child care programs are not subject to testing unless a school district maintains its own water supply. For schools such as Grants Pass that get water from a municipal or community water source, the decision to test for lead and copper is left entirely to the school districts.

"It's up to the local school districts if they test, where they test, how frequently, and what they do with those results," said Robb Cowie, communications director for OHA.

Currently, the Grants Pass School District sources its water from the city of Grants Pass with the exception of South Middle School, Allen Dale Elementary and Redwood Elementary, where water is sourced from private wells.

The Three Rivers School District sources water from private wells at all schools in the district. Wells are tested every three years per federal regulations at the Grants Pass Water Lab.

According to Three Rivers Superintendent David Holmes,

all but two schools within the district were tested in 2014.

The two remaining sites are scheduled for testing in summer 2017.

"We follow all state requirements on testing. We've got established wells that have been tested on a regular basis for years," Holmes said. "The tests have always come back well within the EPA levels. We've never had any concern based on any test that have ever been run."

About 20 years ago, a handful of schools within the Three Rivers district were above EPA lead levels of 15 parts per billion. Now, all schools are in accordance with EPA lead and copper levels, many coming in at 0.00 mg/L.

The OHA reports that most Oregon schools and child care programs get their drinking water from municipal or community water systems, which regularly test water at specific numbers of home taps, but not schools.

In April, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown issued a directive to review water quality in schools after elevated levels of lead were found in 14 of 92 water sources at Portland Public Schools, including a handful of drinking fountains.

The governor's directive includes the participation of the Oregon Department of Education and the OHA. Both agencies will work collaboratively with school districts and child care programs to test drinking water over the summer. The agencies will provide information and technical support.

Lead is a neurotoxin which children are especially susceptible to because their bodies absorb metals at higher rates than adults.

The Oregonian newspaper reported Wednesday that the a senior Portland Public Schools manager was put on paid leave because of his role in the district's much-criticized response to high lead levels found at two schools.

The manager resisted testing school water quality and gave false information about the safety of drinking water in schools.

Also this week, school district officials in the Portland suburb of Gresham said elevated lead levels were found at two schools after recent drinking water tests.

—Reach reporter Alex Madison
at 541-474-3718 or amadison@
thedailycourier.com

OUR VIEW

Make certain

drinking water is safe

Some believe lead contributed to the fall of the Roman Empire. Heavily used in ancient times for many purposes including sweetening wine, it caused an array of illnesses — everything from neurological damage to sterility. Added to paint and gasoline in 20th century America, it is thought lead's corrosive effects on brains and bodies contributed to youth violence and poor school performance by inner-city kids.

The quantity of lead found in drinking water in some Oregon schools is far below the astronomical levels that once caused devastating diseases. But parents, children and officials are right to exercise great caution when it comes to lead. Even a cursory search on the internet for information about lead exposure turns up literally millions of frightening references. Symptoms include everything from learning difficulties and loss of appetite to hearing loss and constipation.

Modern-day Oregon parents aren't inclined to take such news sitting down, particularly after shocking news of widespread lead exposure and official indifference in Flint, Michigan.

Eastern Oregon schools are at various stages of conducting tests of drinking water. Statewide, Gov. Kate Brown has recommended tests by school districts and licensed child care facilities — the state doesn't have legal authority to insist on these tests. It's obvious that everyone who looks after children should make certain drinking water is safe. Testing and prompt remediation of plumbing systems that leach lead into water is essential — the sooner the better.

Many homes and commercial buildings in rural Oregon date from a time before there was much concern about lead. Even some relatively new homes have the potential of exposing residents to unacceptable levels of lead and copper — the latter also can cause health problems. It wasn't until 1991 that the federal Safe Drinking Water Act began heightening awareness of the issue. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests using "only cold water from the tap for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Hot water is more likely to contain higher levels of lead. Most of the lead in household water usually comes from the plumbing in your house, not from the local water supply."

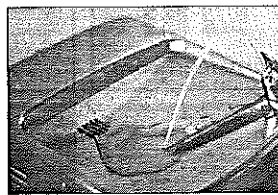
Lead paint was commonly used until 1978, and children can absorb it by eating cracked and peeling paint or playing in rooms or soil contaminated with paint dust. Take precautions to avoid having children spend time in pre-1978 houses that are in the midst of renovation, which can spread lead dust. In all pre-1978 buildings, assume that the paint has lead unless tests show otherwise. The CDC advises, "Because household dust is a major source of lead, you should wet-mop floors and wet-wipe horizontal surfaces every 2-3 weeks." None of this is panic-worthy. Rational precautions by families and school officials will substantially lower any risk that might stem from low-level lead exposure. But it is worth paying attention to, and making certain authorities follow through on their promises.

Testing and prompt remediation of plumbing systems that leach lead into water is essential — the sooner the better.

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Sandy Post
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"We wanted to mitigate any fears."

— District spokesperson Julia Monteith

Oregon Trail schools water safe to drink, tests show

Results fall below EPA's action level for lead

By ELIZABETH KELLAR
The Post

While other Portland-area school districts grapple with how to handle the recent discovery of elevated lead levels in their drinking water, the Oregon Trail School District announced last week that test results from early June show all of its school locations are far below the Environmental Protection Agency's action level.

District spokesperson Julia Monteith said the district did not anticipate any problems with the water, but chose to have it tested to calm community concerns.

"We wanted to mitigate any fears,"

Monteith said.

The EPA's lead action level is 15 parts per billion, or 15 ppb. Firwood and Naas elementary schools and Sandy High School all had pH levels at 7.24, indicating that their water was within the normal balance range and not considered corrosive. Lead is most likely to enter drinking water through the deterioration of pipes. For that reason, those schools were not tested.

Here's how each of the others schools fared:

- Welches Elementary School: 1.4 ppb
- Welches Middle School: 0.4 ppb
- Sandy Grade School: 1.6 ppb
- Cedar Ridge Middle School: 1.8 ppb
- Pioneer Building, current site of the Blended Learning Center: 1.8 ppb
- Boring Middle School: 1.2-10.7 ppb, tested June 6, 2016
- Kelso Elementary School: None detected, tested June 17, 2014

Woodburn, OR
(Marion Co.)
Woodburn Independent
(Cir. W. 3,490)

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Statewide action prompted by lead found in Portland schools' water

By Lindsay Keefe
The Independent

In the wake of the discovery that Portland Public Schools had elevated levels of lead in its water, Oregon legislative leaders have united to recommend all 197 districts throughout the state to test their drinking water for lead contamination.

This includes local districts, which are already in the process of getting their water tested.

In fact, North Marion School District is unusual in that it has what the Oregon Health Authority calls a "non-transient, non-community" water supply, meaning it has its own well.

"Because we have our own municipal water system on campus we do regular testing of our water," ex-

plained Superintendent Boyd Keyser, adding, "We are planning to expand the places we gather our samples from and include them in our regular collection process."

The federal Environmental Protection Agency says lead in water greater than 15 parts per billion is dangerous. In some cases, according to media reports, water tested at Portland schools exceeded that level. Lead can cause long-term health problems in children and adults. Many school buildings — and other public facilities — constructed before the late 1970s could have water running through lead pipes. In some cases, buildings confined to use the more durable lead pipes well into the mid-1980s.

The six legislative leaders — Senate President Peter Courtney, Senate Majority Leader Ginny Burdick, Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli, Speaker of the House Tina Kotek, House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson and House Republican Leader Mike McLane — issued the following joint statement:

"Making sure students are drinking

safe water in school is our top priority. We need to know the extent of this problem now. If school districts lack the funds to immediately test for lead contamination, the Legislature's Emergency Board must be ready to step in and make sure all students have safe drinking water as soon as possible."

The testing doesn't appear to be cost-prohibitive for smaller districts like Mount Angel and St. Paul, which said the testing, depending on positive results, will only cost the district \$200 and \$500, respectively.

"We have tested our buildings with retail water test kits and results have come back good," said Troy Stoops, Mount Angel School District superintendent. "We are now taking the next step of having eight water samples from our schools tested by Waterlab Corporation in Salem. We anticipate spending less than \$200 total for testing if test results come back within acceptable ranges."

He added that Waterlab is giving school districts a discount because of the recent media coverage and level

of urgency.

St. Paul School District Superintendent Joe Wehrli said the district will be testing its water this summer.

"The district will test food service areas, drinking fountain and ice machine locations," he said. "The district will be collecting samples for the lab to process following their collection technique recommendations."

In Woodburn, Superintendent Chuck Ransom said the district will definitely test its water this summer.

"Fortunately for Woodburn, because of the renovations that are part of the bond projects, we can continue to work with our construction manager and engineers during the projects on any currently proposed and additional plumbing upgrades," he pointed out.

Gervais School District will also be looking at testing its water, but Superintendent Matt Henry was unclear as to how the district will approach the process from now on. He said the district will work closely with the city in the coming weeks.

For the final days of school, stu-

dents in north Marion County have not had to be given water bottles for drinking water, as has been done in Portland schools.

Portland Public Schools has turned off water to all its elementary schools and stacked cases of bottled water in the buildings for children and staff.

The Portland district also has hired Portland law firm Stoll Berne to investigate the district's systemic response to lead in the water and complete a personnel review.

Two staff members — Chief Operating Officer Tony Magliano and Senior Manager for Health and Safety Andy Fridley — were placed on paid administrative leave during the month-long investigation.

Shasta Kearns Moore contributed to this story.

Lindsay Keefe covers the small cities of north Marion County. She can be reached at 503-765-1193 or lkeefe@woodburnindependent.com.

509-J to test water at its area schools

Last week School District Superintendent Rick Molitor sent out a letter to inform parents about what the district is doing to ensure its water supply is safe.

"As we are all concerned about lead in drinking water, our district will follow the guidance provided by the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority," Molitor said.

Steps the district will be taking include:

1. Identification of potential sources of lead. Test all taps used for drinking or food preparation on school property to identify any potential lead problems.

"We will follow the Environmental Protection Agency's 3 T's Revised Technical Guide-

ance to ensure that samples for lead are collected properly and from the right places.

Samples will be sent to an OHA-accredited drinking water laboratory for lead analysis," Molitor said.

2. Stop access if lead is found. If harmful amounts of lead are found, then access to water taps will be shut off and access denied.

3. Communication of results. The district will make the results from tests for lead in water available to students, families, and the community as quickly as possible.

4. Mitigation and correction. Replacement of any potential source of lead in building plumbing will occur as provided through the EPA 3T's Guidance.

School district to be commended for quick response

The Lincoln County School District (LCSD) may have overreacted recently, but we think that was a good thing. 744-7

Recently, LCSD conducted tests on the water at every school in the district, checking the levels of lead, copper and bacteria. All of the tests came back clean with the exception of one site at one school — of 12 sources tested at Yaquina View Elementary School in Newport, one water fountain showed a level of lead that was above the acceptable level established by the Environmental Protection Agency. It was, however, below the cap established by the Oregon Health Authority.

With only one week of school left before summer, LCSD opted to shut off all sources of drinking water and instead bring tanks of drinking water into the school. "Every classroom received cups, and then a big container," said Yaquina View Principal Libba Sager. "Every classroom, the office, the health room and the cafeteria."

Rich Belloni, director of LCSD support services, said it made more sense to overreact than to take any chances. We agree. It's impossible to determine whether just one additional week of exposure to that water would have had any adverse health impacts on students and staff, but the district's prompt action was a show of good faith and an indication they are determined to quickly address the problem.

"There's nothing here that is sacred or secret," Belloni said. "If we got a problem, we got a problem. If we need to fix it, let's fix it. We're not burying anything." And these were not mere words. In fact, Belloni contacted the News-Times shortly after learning of the test results at Yaquina View, and he expressed a desire to make the public aware of the problem and let people know what the district was doing about it.

This level of transparency is nice to see. Maybe it comes as a response to heightened public awareness about this issue, generated by the public health catastrophe in Flint, Mich., or closer to home, the problems Portland is having with elevated lead levels. But in our book, LCSD is to be commended for getting out ahead of this.

Belloni said they will be testing every faucet at Yaquina View to find the source of the elevated lead level. If necessary, they will begin investigating water pipes. "If it's bad, then we start thinking about tearing the wall apart," he said.

The fact the building will soon be vacated for the summer will certainly help, and hopefully it will prove to be a quick and easy fix.

— STEVE CARD

Free session on water testing info

A free informational event on testing well water is being held June 21, sponsored by Box R Water Analysis Laboratory and the health department.

A session for real estate agents will be from 12-1 p.m.; and the public session will be from 6:30-7:30 p.m., both at Carey Foster Hall at the Crook County Fairgrounds in Prineville.

Representatives from the

state well water agency will be on hand to tell people how to take a proper water sample for testing.

Tests are done for things such as bacteria, nitrates, arsenic, lead and copper.

They will talk about the age of a house and types of pipes used during that era.

For more information, call Box R Water at 541-447-4911.

YAQUINA VIEW

School investigating source of lead in sink's water

BY CALLEY HAIR
Of the News-Times
744-7

NEWPORT — Every water fountain at Yaquina View Elementary will run dry this week while the Lincoln County School District investigates the source of one sink's borderline lead concentration. "Our whole deal is to err on the side of caution," said Rich Belloni, director of district support services.

One of Yaquina View's 12 surveyed sites contained a questionable level of lead, and the school shut off all fountains and brought in drinking water tanks for every classroom, Belloni said.

"Every classroom received cups, and then a big container," said Yaquina View Principal Libba Sager. "Every classroom, the office, the health room and the cafeteria."

With school letting out for the summer on June 16, it made more sense to overreact than take any chances, Belloni said.

"It's only a few days," said Belloni, adding that water tanks were also installed in the gymnasium and teacher's lounge. "There was still some concerns, so we just went ahead and did everything."

The school surveyed a total of 12 sinks and drinking fountains for copper and lead over two rounds of testing May 13 and May 31.

The results revealed the drinking fountain in Room 31 contains 0.0192 milligrams per liter of lead, above the federal action limit of 0.015 mg/L, the school discovered late Wednesday, June 8.

Whether that amount is actually over the limit, Sager said, is a point of debate.

While the Environmental Protection Agency's

that drinking water in public systems must not surpass 0.015 mg/L, the Oregon Health Authority caps allowable lead concentration in schools at 0.020 mg/L.

After shutting off the sink Thursday morning, June 9, the school held a meeting with teachers and administrators to determine the best way forward.

The district initially planned on providing water tanks only to the classroom in question, but changed course when teachers encouraged an overly cautious response to help allay parent anxiety.

The largest concern, one teacher pointed out in the afterschool meeting Thursday, was that the majority of Yaquina View's classrooms weren't randomly selected for testing.

Clean, tested water foun-

theast hallway, cafeteria, girl's restroom, and rooms 22, 26, and 40. Tested sinks include those in rooms 35, 40, 20 and 22.

For the rest, the school can't promise the water's safety.

"We believe it is, but we can't guarantee that," Belloni agreed. "We haven't tested the other ones."

The goal was to be as transparent with staff, students and parents as possible, Belloni told the room of nearly 40 people at the meeting.

"There's nothing here that is sacred or secret," Belloni said. "If we got a problem, we got a problem. If we need to fix it, let's fix it. We're not burying anything."

The school also held voluntary lead testing after school on Tuesday, June 14, Sager said. As of press time, the results of that testing had not

The water assessment was part of a district-wide push to gauge water quality before the summer, a cautionary step to prevent the type of high-profile lapses currently playing out at Portland Public Schools, Belloni said.

Every other school in the district tested six on-campus sites for traces of copper and lead. Yaquina View tested twice as many due to an unrelated Norovirus breakout in May that the school feared might be spreading through its water supply (it wasn't).

The lead in Yaquina View's Room 31 showed the district's sole violation.

"Before school starts again, we're going to test every faucet in the school," Belloni said.

Isolated instances of lead cropping up in otherwise safe facilities are usually a

Belloni said. The fixture in Room 31 was fairly new, although he's not ruling it out as a possible cause of the contamination.

Tracing the lead's source will involve a process of trial and error. The district since replaced the sink fixture in question, and will submit a new sample for testing June 15. If the results, which Belloni said take about 10 days to receive, show that there's still an issue, his department will start investigating the water pipes.

"If it's bad, then we start thinking about tearing the wall apart," Belloni said. "The good news is it will be the summer, so nobody will be around."

Contact reporter Calley Hair at 541-265-8571 ext. 211 or chair@news-times.com

School district to conduct lead testing

By April Sykes 744-7
Testing for lead has been planned for all schools in the Morrow County School District, MCSDD Superintendent Dirk Dirksen told the board at its regular meeting in Heppner Monday night.

Testing will begin at 6 a.m. on Wednesday, June 22, at Heppner Elementary and Heppner High School. Testing for A.C. Houghton Elementary, Irrigon, Irrigon Elementary, Irrigon High School, Morrow Education Center, Irrigon, the north district office building, Sam

Boardman Elementary, Windy River Elementary, Boardman, and Riverside High School, Boardman, will get underway Thursday, June 23, beginning at 6 a.m.

Dirksen said that results should be available a week to 10 days following testing. Results will determine the action to be taken, if any.

Awareness of lead contamination was initially prompted by news stories of lead contamination in Michigan. The Oregon Department of Education and

the Oregon Health Authority, responding to Governor Kate Brown's directive, recently recommended that all school districts and child care programs test drinking water this summer as part of a statewide plan to reduce student exposure to lead.

Also at the meeting, the board, following a budget hearing, adopted a \$39,312,210 2016-17 budget and made appropriations. Details are as follows: General Fund: Instruction-\$15,163,964, Sup-

-See SCHOOL DISTRICT/
PAGE FOUR

SCHOOL DISTRICT

-Continued from PAGE ONE
port Services-\$9,443,939, Debt Service-\$270,000, Transfers-\$2,120,000, Contingency-\$0, Total-\$26,997,903; Special Revenue Fund: Instruction-\$2,746,520, Support Services-\$1,014,415, Enterprise & Community-\$1,118,209, Contingency-\$2,148,889, Total-\$7,028,033; Debt Service Fund: Debt Service-\$2,597,185, Transfers-\$948,889, Total-\$3,546,074; Capital Projects Fund: Support Services-\$611,823, Facilities Acquisition-\$908,177, Total-\$1,520,000; Total Appropriations, All Funds-\$39,092,010, Total Unappropriated and Reserve Amounts, All Funds-\$220,200.

The board also adopted a resolution imposing the tax at the rate of \$4.0342 per \$1,000 assessed value for the permanent tax rate, \$1.0000 per \$1,000 assessed value for the local option tax and \$375,000 for debt service on general obligation bonds.

In other business, the board:

-learned from Dirksen that the district has ordered the following items this summer as a result of tech grants: 360 Chromebooks, 97 iPads, 13 Chromebook carts, four Chromebook

cabinets, three 70-inch TVs, one 70-inch ActivPanel Touch tv, two 3-D printers, one classroom instruction recording set, a Quadcopter class kit, two virtual welders and camera equipment for yearbook.

-approved a license agreement with the Morrow County Unified Recreation District. Dirksen commended MCURD for providing extra-curricular cultural and recreational activities for district students and community events.

-learned from Dirksen that the school district enabled students to earn 1,816 college credits while attending high school for the 2015-16 school year. He noted that the program has come a long way since initiating the program in 2011-12, during which students earned 396 college credits.

-heard from Dirksen that MCSDD high school seniors were awarded \$1,458,000 in scholarships this year as follows: Heppner High School-\$185,000, Irrigon High School-\$868,000, Boardman High School-\$405,000.

-heard a report from Assistant Superintendent George Mendoza and Dirksen concerning early education, specifically four-year-olds. Dirksen said that

while Umatilla/Morrow Headstart provides educational opportunities for children based on financial data, the district wants "all kids to have that opportunity." Mendoza said that while students entering kindergarten in Morrow County schools test below state and other school averages, data shows that they have caught up or exceeded averages by the third grade.

-approved a 10 cent increase in lunch prices as follows: elementary-\$2.45-\$2.55, junior/senior high-\$2.70-\$2.80, adult lunch-\$3.25-\$3.35, milk-.50 cents-.60 cents. There were no price increases for reduced price lunches, elementary breakfasts at \$1.00, junior/senior high school breakfasts at \$1.25 and reduced price breakfasts. The district was required to increase the prices by the "Healthy Hunger-Free Food Act" to meet federal equity pricing requirements and to offset continuing increases in the cost of food.

-learned of a work session on school security in August and another in October. Dirksen said that the schools will be working together with law enforcement so that "when issues arise, we're all on the same page."

-received the following enrollment report for June: A.C. Houghton Elementary-273; Sam Boardman Elementary-331, Heppner Elementary-182; Irrigon Elementary-189, Windy River Elementary-219, Heppner Jr./Sr. High School-160, Irrigon Jr./Sr. High School-370, Riverside Jr./Sr. High School-398, Morrow Education Center-50, Total-2,172.

-approved the following employment action for June: Resignations/non-renewals-Shane Arndt, RJSHS head softball coach, Katie Burton, SBE first-grade teacher until the end of the 2015-16 school year, Michael Cotes, WRE/SBE PE teacher, end of 2015-16 school year; Julie Escobedo, IJSHS high school assistant cheerleading coach, Jordan Mittelsdorf, RJSHS assistant softball coach, Randal Olsen, SBE head teacher, end of 2015-16 school year, Ken Thompson, IJSHS high school assistant football coach, Amy Wolters, HJSHS ed assistant, end of 2015-16 school year; Retirements/Carol Wilson, end of 2015-16 year; Employment/Promotions/Transfers-Elvia Ayala, Boardman schools temporary summer custodian, Devin Bailey, IJSHS junior high science teacher

2016-17, Ashley Beard, RJSHS junior high social studies teacher 2016-17, Julia Finch, SBE second grade teacher 2016-17, Kathryn Jones, SBE first grade teacher 2016-17, Jill Ledbetter, SBE head teacher 2016-17, Wendy McAlister, RJSHS library tech 2016-17, Richard Moore, WRE/SBE elementary PE teacher 2016-17, Rosa Norwood, SBE head secretary 2016-17, Michelle Raible, SBE Title I teacher 2016-17, Adriane Rodriguez, ACH third grade teacher 2016-17, Ken Thompson, Irrigon schools temporary summer custodian, Jill Williams, IJSHS junior high math teacher 2016-17, Laura Winters, WRE ELD teacher 2016-17, Tim Zacharias, IJSHS high school language arts teacher 2016-17; Extra duty contracts-Chair Costello, RJSHS high school head girls' basketball coach, head baseball coach 2016-17, Cindy Dieter, RJSHS assistant cheerleading coach 2016-17, Loren Dieter, RJSHS high school assistant football coach 2016-17, David Salas, IJSHS high school head boys' basketball coach 2016-17, Robert Saunders, IJSHS high school assistant football coach 2016-17.

-approved the first reading of rescinded, new

or revised policies on the following: whistleblower, sick time, student fundraising activities, graduation requirements, student absences and excuses, student conduct, student discipline, prescription medications, staff complaints and identification/talented and gifted students.

-adopted the following rescinded, new or revised policies on the following: local wellness program, drug free workplace, assessment program, public conduct on district property.

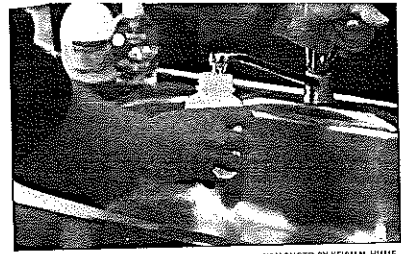
-adopted new, revised or rescinded administrative rules on reimbursable school meals and milk programs, employee requests for domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault or stalking leave, criminal records checks-fingerprints, bidding requirements.

-approved annual organizational details.

-held an executive session concerning real estate.

-heard the following announcements: summer school June 14-30; Oregon School Board Association summer board conference July 15-17; administration returns from summer break Aug. 1; 2016-17 staff in-service Aug. 22-25; students begin Aug. 29, next board meeting, Heppner Elementary School, Aug. 8.

744-7



H&N PHOTO BY KEVIN H. HUME

Darin Martins takes a water sample in the nurse's office to test for lead and copper levels at Mazama High School.

County schools test for lead, copper



H&N PHOTO BY KEVIN H. HUME

Darin Martins, a maintenance and custodial supervisor with the Klamath County School District, takes a water sample from a sink in a cafeteria kitchen to test for lead and copper levels at Mazama High School on Wednesday.

Test/ from A1

Wednesday morning, Martins filled a plastic container with water from a drinking fountain at Mazama High School, one of many to be sent to Spring Street Analytical and Nelson Labs for testing.

"We're not expecting to find anything," Darin Martins said. "We're just doing it for our own peace of mind."

'HIGH RISK SITES'

Starting this week, Martins is taking five samples from each KCS D building's "high risk sites," or where students and staff consume water from, such as kitchen sinks or drinking fountains.

Martins identifies the five sites, and places a "Do not use" sign for at least six hours and draws the first sample the next day.

"That water sits in there over a period of time, and if it's caustic, it will eat away at that lead," Martins said. "So your first draw is where you get your lead contamination. We don't expect anything."

The Lead and Copper Rule of the Safe Drinking Water Act does not require public water systems to specifically sample schools for lead and copper contamination Randy Travis, city of Klamath Falls water division manager said.

The act sets specific criteria to test sample locations with a high risk, and schools don't necessarily fall in that category Travis said.

Travis said they mainly look for older homes us-

ing lead piping or homes that were constructed in early '80s late '90s with copper pipes.

"Those are example where you would have lead coming in contact with water, not specifically schools," Travis said.

CORROSIVE ACTION

Travis said many factors contribute to corrosive action on lead materials in the system that result in contaminating the water.

Some of those factors include a low pH, low alkalinity, temperature, hardness and high conductivity.

Travis added that over 30 years of monitoring and analysis of the city's groundwater sources and water quality shows the drinking water ranks low in those factors that could contribute to lead contamination.

"Our water does not have the characteristics that would pose the risk of leaching lead into the water," Travis said.

The most recent water samples collected at the sources or wells and tested for lead contamination indicated there is no detectable amount of lead in the source water, Travis said in an email.

The Klamath Falls City Schools District also plans to test schools' water for lead and copper contamination.

KFCS Superintendent Paul Hillyer said the sampling starts on June 27. After a few weeks of sampling, KFCS will receive results three to four weeks later.

canderson@heraldandnews.com
 on Twitter @CAnder-sonHN

7/4-7

City schools to follow with water tests at their facilities

By COURTNEY ANDERSON
 H&N Staff Reporter

Starting this week, the Klamath County School District is testing all schools' and facilities'

water for lead and copper after Portland and surrounding areas found their drinking water contaminated with lead.

"In light of what happened in Portland, with the testing there and around the state, we wanted

do the same down here to make sure the drinking water is safe for all of our students," KCS D Superintendent Greg Theide said.

"The results of testing will drive our actions beyond that. We are trying to be proactive

and be ahead of the curve."

Darin Martins, KCS D maintenance and custodial supervisor, said test results will be available in three to four weeks.

More TEST | A5

Oregon legislative leaders united in one voice last week to strongly encourage Oregon's 197 school districts to follow the recommendation to test drinking water for lead at all school facilities across the state.

All six leaders in the Oregon Legislature joined in expressing their concern that drinking water in schools across Oregon could be contaminated with lead.

Senate President Peter Courtney, Senate Majority Leader Ginny Burdick, and Senate Republican Leader

Legislative leaders ask E-Board to pay for lead testing in schools

Condon, OR
 (Gilliam Co.)
 Times-Journal
 (Circ. W. 1,500)

JUN 16 2016
 Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Ted Ferrell, Speaker of the House, Tina Korak, House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson, and House Republican Leader Mike McLane issued the following joint statement:

The leaders said school officials should follow the recommendations announced Wednesday by the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Education. The leaders said they will ask the Legislative Emergency Board to pay for the testing with an expenditure when the board meets again in September.

Tests: Drinking water safe at Salem Heights

MOLLY J. SMITH
/ STATESMAN
JOURNAL
Fourth
grader Tyson
Turner
writes his
name on a
water bottle
at Valley
Inquiry
Charter
School in
Salem on
March 16.



61 schools to be tested for lead

TRACY LOEW
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Students and staff at Salem Heights Elementary School are back to drinking from fountains and faucets after tests for lead contamination came back clear. The school was the first in a project to sample drinking water in all 88 buildings in the Salem-Keizer School District that use municipal water — 61 schools and 27 administrative and other facilities.

The district announced the plan June 2, after other districts in Oregon and

across the country began finding elevated lead levels in school drinking water.

It began supplying bottled water to Salem Heights around the same time, after an old report indicating elevated lead levels there surfaced.

Concern about lead in drinking water has been growing in light of the public health disaster in Flint, Michigan, where a series of cost-cutting measures and mistakes caused the lead poisoning of an entire community.

Lead can leach from older pipes and fittings, especially if drinking water isn't treated to control corrosion.

So far in Oregon, elevated lead levels have been found in drinking water in

See LEAD, Page 4A

Lead

Continued from Page 1A

schools in Portland, Beaverton, Eugene and Lake Oswego.

Last week, Oregon health and education officials recommended that state tests be tested in all schools and local health leaders said they want the state to help pay the bill.

The Salem-Keizer School District is seeking a contractor to conduct the sampling.

The district request for proposals closed Wednesday. It calls for water samples to be collected or earlier, and to be complete by Aug. 19.

The successful bidder must follow U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines, taking samples, and must contract with an accredited lab to analyze them.

One source in lead can cause health problems ranging from stomach distress to brain damage. Children are especially susceptible because their bodies absorb lead at higher rates than adults.

The EPA and Oregon require schools to test at 20 parts per billion or more.

Salem-Keizer has opted to use a lower action level of 15 parts per billion.

Health officials, however, say no level is safe, and health effects can occur at levels as low as 5 parts per billion.

At Salem Heights, the district took samples from all 48 faucets and fountains used for drinking water on June 5. Samples were analyzed by Salem's Verich, which can detect levels as small as 2 parts per billion.

A sink in the school office tested higher than 3.3 parts per billion. The district will post lead test results as they are available on a web site at <http://www.salemkeizer.org/parents/parents-test-lead>. **744-7** Journal.com, 503-399-0775 or follow at Twitter [@StatesmanJournal](https://twitter.com/StatesmanJournal).

Portland, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
Tribune
(Cir. 2xW. 180,000)

JUN 16 2016

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PPS must unplug communication lines

The almost daily revelations about tainted water at Portland Public Schools and the administration's sputtering response is deeply disturbing.

The list of what we know (a half-dozen spigots inside a couple schools tested high for lead this spring) is dwarfed by unanswered questions: How long have officials known about this problem? Were there other faucets that were replaced earlier? Who knew of this problem and

OUROPINION

when? And, of course, why didn't they tell the parents of children who might have been affected? The district's unwillingness to come clean is an affront not only to parents, whose kids may have been subjected to high levels of lead, but also the taxpaying public, which expects school officials to keep its students and staff safe.

And while the water issue is, understandably, making headlines, another document — reported in today's Portland Tribune — is equally troubling.

As detailed by education reporter Shasta Kearns Moore, a district audit committee will soon be reviewing a damning risk assessment report that puts the water controversy in the larger context of a bureaucracy that is committing management malpractice.

It's not clear whether Carole Smith, approaching her ninth year as PPS superintendent, will survive this controversy. But if she does, the risk assessment report offers her employer — the school board — a clear punch list, as well as a baseline, to measure progress.

Here are the highlights of the report, prepared by TKW, a Lake Oswego-based accounting firm, stripped of its measured

MONEY DEDICATED TO STANDARDIZED TESTING OF STUDENTS IN OREGON SCHOOLS IN 2015:

\$12 MILLION

MONEY DEDICATED TO STANDARDIZED TESTING OF WATER IN OREGON SCHOOLS IN 2015:

\$0

tone and careful wordsmithing.

- There is virtually no accountability within the school district. Administrators work in "silos" and don't talk to one another. Principals operate their schools like fiefdoms — which in some cases is great, but in others is bad for students, parents and staff. Principals need to have shared expectations, clear training and accountability.
- The administration is reactionary and optimistic, not planning for the realities of the future. PPS needs to put together a strategic plan for operations, bolster its rainy-day fund while the economy is booming, and come up with a continuity plan. The school board recently voted to acknowledge the reality of climate change in its textbooks — will the

administration do the same in its policies?

- There is a culture of fear and uncertainty at the district that hinders problem-solving. True collaborations can occur only when information is shared freely. A qualified independent auditor or ombudsman under the board of directors' supervision would be a great step toward accountability and complaint resolution.
- It's up to the seven board members to decide whether Smith is up to the task of leading a balky bureaucracy through this difficult to-do list. But the report notes that they share responsibility for the district's failures. Four of the seven have been on the board less than a year and some are reacting to specific problems,

rather than setting goals for the administration to follow.

As noted above, the board's efforts have been hampered by broken communications: Although the Office of Community Involvement and Public Affairs got comparatively high marks (posting only a "moderate risk"), it is notorious for trying to manage and restrict what the public knows about public schools in Portland.

PPS has long been considered the most hostile public agency to local media — delaying responses to public records requests or even simple answers to basic questions.

As a news organization, we don't like it. But we're more concerned by the increasing evidence that the district also stonewalls parents who want to know whether their children are safe.

Two weeks ago, as revelations about lead in the drinking water came to light, the Pamplin Media Group queried nearly two dozen school districts outside of Portland about water tests in their schools. Virtually all of them responded within a day and one of them — Tigard-Fualatin School District — noted that its most recent tests were posted on its website shortly after they came out in October.

Compare that to PPS, where requests for information — whether from reporters or parents — are viewed as a call to obfuscate, rather than a chance to educate.

Parents, stakeholders and the media are fed up with a tendency to ignore questions, proposals and complaints in the hopes that they will go away.

The risk assessment report offers the board several steps to take to get the administration operating effectively. The first should be to pull the plug on the practice of withholding public information.

LOSD finds elevated levels of lead

Drinking fountain, kitchen sink not regularly used by students, district says

By JILLIAN DALEY
The Review

Two fixtures in two of the Lake Oswego School District's buildings have tested positive for lead levels that the Federal Environmental Protection Agency classifies as above the maximum contamination limit, according to a district-commissioned report.

Neither of the fixtures are regularly used by children, the district said.

The report — which The Review obtained June 9 through a

link on a community listserv — said that a drinking fountain in the Technology Building on the Lake Oswego High School campus and a hand-washing sink in the Lake Oswego Junior High School kitchen both tested positive for elevated levels of lead.

The Technology Building fountain, which is "rarely used" and located in a staff development room, tested at 35 parts per billion for lead. The sink in the LOJ kitchen tested at 34 parts per billion. The EPA says lead levels in water greater than 15 parts per billion is dangerous, and the agency recommends outlets be taken out of service at 20 ppb or higher.

Both sinks have been shut off, the district said, and follow-up tests will be performed this summer.

"As a precautionary mea-

sure, a newer, stainless-steel drinking fountain in an adjacent study hall room (in the Technology Building) has also been turned off," the district said.

School districts throughout the region are working to assure parents that their water is safe in the wake of revelations of high lead levels in Portland Public Schools. LOSD Communications Director Nancy Duin told The Review on June 2 that parents had called and emailed about potential lead issues, and that the district had hired Alex in Analytical Laboratories to perform tests on at least two sinks and two water fountains in every building.

Tests also were conducted "in a representative classroom if classrooms in that school have a sink used for getting drinking water," Duin said.

Most of those tests showed no detectable levels of lead, according to the report. But 14 fixtures did test at levels between 2 ppb (the minimum reporting limit) and 12 ppb, the district said. The drinking fountain with the highest level of lead was found at the Lake Grove Swim Park; it showed 7 ppb. Other fixtures with detectable lead levels were used for hand washing and food preparation, the district said, or not at all.

Elevated levels of lead in drinking water can cause serious health problems, including stomach distress and brain damage, and children are more affected by low doses than adults.

Contact Jillian Daley at 503-636-1281 ext. 109 or jdaley@lakeoswego-review.com.

Lake Oswego, OR
(Clackamas Co.)
Review
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Lead found in water

Small amount of lead found at Blossom Gulch Elementary

JILLIAN WARD 744-7
The World

COOS BAY — A small amount of lead has been found in the water at a Coos Bay school.

Tests are being done again in the district after lead was discovered in schools in Portland and Eugene recently, but so far the lead being reported is still below the "actionable" level and only at Blossom Gulch Elementary.

The district's maintenance director, Rick Roberts, said the level of lead found in water where something must be done is at 15 parts per billion (ppb). The amount found at Blossom Gulch is 2 ppb.

That is significantly lower than the lead found in Flint, Michigan's, water, which came out at 25 ppb, 100 ppb, and in one case 1,000 ppb.

"We started testing the water in May," Roberts said. "The teachers at Blossom Gulch were drinking bottled water, probably because of what happened in Flint, Michigan, and I heard the

funding for the bottled water was ending so we wanted to look at if the water there was good."

The last time the Coos Bay School District tested its water was in 2002. Those results showed ND, or non detected, in Blossom Gulch, Madison, Millicoma, Bunker Hill and Sunset. However, Milner Crest showed the water at 3 ppb, Eastside at 8 ppb, and Charleston at 17 ppb. Both Charleston and Eastside are no longer being used as schools.

"Charleston was the only school that came in over the actionable level back then," Roberts said. "The other tests showed

our schools considerably under 15 ppb."

Roberts believes the ppb levels are showing up above zero because the buildings are old, and though the pipes are not made of lead, lead soldering was used on the joints.

The other schools are being tested over the summer. Roberts is testing only two sites where students can get water because test fees are \$60. The district has around 157 sites where children can get water, or that district employees use to cook, and if

Please see Lead, Page A10

Condon, OR
(Gilliam Co.)
Times-Journal
(Cir. W. 1,500)

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Lead

From A1

each site was tested it would cost just under \$10,000.

"The Oregon Department of Education is working with the Oregon Health Department to provide technical assistance if the districts need it, and are encouraging everyone to test," Roberts said. "At this point, based on our results here and the recent results from Blossom Gulch, the schools being operated today are way under the containment ppb."

School board chairman James Martin said the district will remain proactive whenever any potential concern comes to light, either national or local, and will

make sure everything is done so that the schools remain a healthy place for kids.

"Our facilities director is on top of this," Martin said, "and fortunately this has come up at the beginning of summer so we can look at the issue. If there is a problem, we have time to come up with solutions and fix it."

The North Bend School District's maintenance supervisor, Mark Koechel, said the water has never been tested. However, the district is starting testing now.

"Our buildings have copper pipes and brazed joints," he said. "I don't think our tests will show we have lead in our water."

The EPA reported that a dose of lead that would have little effect on an adult can poten-

tially have significant effect on a child.

"In children, low levels of exposure have been linked to damage to the central and peripheral nervous system, learning disabilities, shorter stature, impaired hearing, and impaired formation and function of blood cells," the EPA wrote on their website, going on to state that it can also cause hyperactivity and anemia. In adults it can cause cardiovascular effects, among other health problems.

Both school districts will announce new test results this summer.

Testing is anticipated to be finished sometime next week.

"We just have to wait on the labs," Roberts said. 744-7

JUN 17 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Gresham-Barlow finds lead in water at 10 schools

Ten other schools show no problems in testing

By TERESA GATSON
The Outlook

Gresham-Barlow School District finished the first round of voluntary testing for lead in the water and found 26 spigots with potentially elevated levels of lead in 10 schools.

Ten schools showed no problematic results, the district testing showed.

Schools across the metropolitan area are testing water for lead after a wave of public outcry in Portland when it was reported that Portland Public Schools had found high levels of lead in water in several schools and did not inform parents or staff or shut down the water sources.

Elevated levels of lead in the body can cause neurological and learning problems, and children are especially vulnerable.

Gresham-Barlow said it is following guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency for testing the water. Under that protocol, testing drinking water quality is a two-step process that starts with sample testing lead accumulation in stagnant water.

If the initial test shows potentially elevated levels of lead — above 15 parts per billion — those fixtures are immediately shut off. The fixtures then undergo a follow-up test. The district said the problematic fixtures will remain shut off until they are fixed. Other sources of water are being used until the problems are resolved.

The district has not yet disclosed the actual levels of lead in the water tested.

In East Multnomah County, Reynolds School District is also voluntarily testing the water in all of its schools and likely will announce results at the end of June. Centennial tested several months ago and found no elevated levels of lead in any building.

Gresham-Barlow posted the last set of results, Wednesday, June 15, which showed no problem water sources at Lewis and Clark Montessori, a charter school, Deep Creek-Damascus K-8, West Orient Middle School or Gresham High School.

See LEAD / Page A5

Lead: Results posted online

From Page A1

The results, released Tuesday, June 14, show three potential problem water sources out of the 26 tested at Barlow High School. Those spigots were in the main office, the baseball field and the child care building. There was one potentially contaminated water source, in the faculty room, out of the 23 tested at Gordon Russell Middle School. Hogan Cedars Elementary School, Springwater Trail High School and Center for Advanced Learning all had no problem samples.

In earlier testing, a teacher workroom at Clear Creek Middle School showed potentially elevated levels of lead. The other 38 water fixtures tested revealed no worrisome results.

Three fountains and faucets of the 24 tested at East Orient Elementary School found possibly elevated levels of lead. The potential problems were in a kindergarten and first grade classroom and next to a grade 4/5 classroom.

At Hall Elementary School, two samples of 18 showed possible high level of lead. These were in a storage room and the kitchen.

Highland Elementary School had two problem spigots — one in the health room and another classroom — out of the 33 tested. The kitchen at North Gresham Elementary School was the only questionable water source out of the 33 tested.

In the first round of results, the district said none of the samples East Gresham, West Gresham or Kelly Creek elementary schools had elevated levels of lead. Powell Valley Elementary School had three questionable samples and Dexter McCarty Middle School had five.

The district posted the results for the water testing at all schools on the district web site, gresham.k12.or.us. Parents and staff were notified by several methods and notifications were translated into other languages.

Lead poisoning can cause brain damage, lower intelligence, behavior and learning problems and hyperactivity, according to the Oregon Health Authority. Except in severe cases, people rarely have noticeable symptoms. The only way to know if there is a problem is a blood test.

Despite the recent concerns over lead in water, exposure to dust from lead paint is the most common way people come in contact with lead, according to the OHA. Portland Public Schools is also under fire for not letting the public know about lead paint at schools. Lead has also been found in some children's toys or jewelry.

For information about the health effects of lead and how to check for lead in your home, visit the Multnomah County Health Department's website: www.leadline.org. If you have questions, call the Multnomah County Lead Hotline at 503-985-4000, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email leadline@multco.us.

McMinnville News Register
(Circ. 2xW. 8,808)

JUN 17 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Mac schools testing for lead

By STARLA POINTER
Of the News Register 744-7

McMinnville School District has begun testing more than 700 water sources for lead, which can pose serious health risks even in very small concentrations, especially for children.

Workers are taking samples from every drinking fountain and faucet used for hand or food washing, according to Director of Facilities Pete Keenan.

He and Superintendent Maryalice Russell termed the sampling a precautionary measure. They haven't received any reports of lead problems, they said, but the district encompasses some older buildings that could pose a risk.

If any of the tests register positive, Russell said, "We will have a plan to remedy that."

See LEAD, A5

JUN 17 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

School water being tested

No elevated levels reported; round of testing in 2002 showed no serious problems

Lab workers are testing water at Catholic schools in western Oregon to make sure lead levels are safe. No problems have yet been reported.

The testing, ordered by the Archdiocese of Portland, began soon after studies showed unsafe levels of heavy metal coming from fixtures at two Portland public schools. The archdiocese has hired a company to survey the water at all of its schools more than 60 of them

"We are definitely jumping on this as fast as possible," says David Renshaw, spokesman for the archdiocese. "We wanted to get out front."

Older pipes containing lead can corrode, allowing the metal to enter drinking water. Lead exposure can cause cognitive delays and other problems, especially in children. Public schools in Gresham found elevated levels last week.

The last round of testing in western Oregon Catholic schools came in 2002 and showed no significant contamination.

"Minor items were taken care of immediately then," Renshaw says.

The current round of testing will cover the whole archdiocese and is being paid for by the archdiocese's insurance plan.

Schools are not under government mandate to investigate water. Renshaw says the testing is a natural and precautionary act taken out of care and concern for students and staff.

He says he is not aware of any students who have had problems.

On June 2, Jesuit High School's principal Paul Hogan sent a letter to families saying that tests taken at the school in March 2014 showed no elevated lead levels.

"We will continue to conduct regular tests on our water systems to ensure the safety of our students, staff, and guests to campus," Hogan wrote.

John Garrow, principal of Central Catholic, says the 77-year-old school in Southeast Portland showed no elevated levels in 2002 and had updated its plumbing to copper pipes at about that time. He sent notes to parents about the situation, saying he expects current testing to confirm that Central Catholic water is safe.

— Ed Tavelle



Agriculture recommends lead concentration in potable water be limited to eight parts per million or less.

Water & Light said water flowing into the schools does not contain any traces of lead. If any samples are positive, Keenan said, it will be attributable to fittings, pipes or solder joints.

Testing runs \$20 a sample. The district has budgeted for the testing of 745 samples at a cost of just under \$15,000.

The U.S. Department of

Flint, Michigan, as a result of a state-ordered switch in water sourcing.

Long-term exposure to lead — through ingestion of loose paint chips or contaminated air or water — can lead to serious health problems. Children are especially vulnerable.

Lead can hinder brain development and cause behavior problems, anemia, headaches, according to the website KidsHealth.

Keenan, who drew 55 sam-

Lead

Continued from A1

Lead has been discovered in the water at several schools in the Portland area. That has stirred statewide concern, leading Gov. Kate Brown to urge all districts in the state to commission tests.

Lead has also become a national issue, driven by severe problems arising in

Test the lead levels in school drinking water

744-17
Given the news from Portland Public Schools and districts in Eugene and Beaverton, it's no wonder the Oregon Department of Education and Oregon Health Authority want every school in the state tested for lead in the water this summer. Nor is it surprising that lawmakers from both major parties are calling on the Legislature's Emergency Board to come up with the money to foot the bill.

Above-normal lead levels were found in water at 51 Portland schools this spring, though parents and some officials were not immediately notified. Neither the state nor the federal Environmental Protection Agency requires that school water be tested routinely. The city of Bend, meanwhile, generally tests for lead every three years, or when changes make ad-

ditional testing necessary.

Local school districts will spend time this summer testing their water and making changes as needed. And, potentially, they'll foot any bills they incur. No one knows how expensive that will be.

Lawmakers want to take the burden off local shoulders, however. Leadership from both parties joined forces last week to request funds for testing from the Emergency Board, which hands out dollars when the Legislature is not in session.

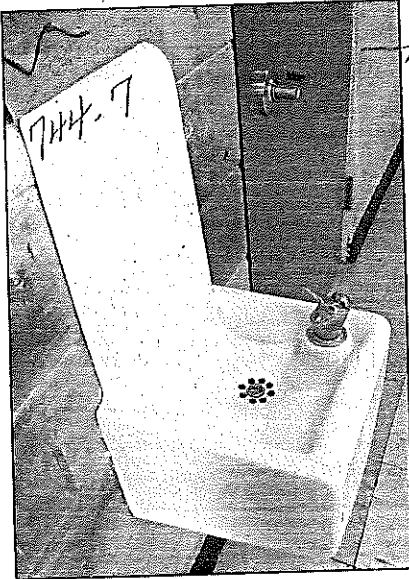
The E-board will no doubt concur. Keeping Oregon's children safe from the damage lead can do is critical, and no district should save money by putting off ensuring kids are drinking uncontaminated water.

Bend, OR
 (Deschutes Co.)
 Bend Bulletin
 (Circ. W. 27,547)

JUN 17 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Water samples taken from Riverside Elementary School drinking fountains reported undetectable amounts of lead by the Grants Pass Water Lab earlier this week, along with five other schools in the Grants Pass School District.



ALEX MADISON
 Daily Courier

Drinking water safe at city schools

No lead discovered in six schools, slight amount in seventh

By Alex Madison
 of the Daily Courier

Grants Pass public school officials announced Thursday that test results have found no levels of detectable lead in drinking water at six schools.

A seventh school, North Middle, had a slightly detectable amount of lead in one drinking fountain that was well within the safe zone required by federal EPA regulations, school officials said.

The testing was ordered last week following news reports that elevated lead levels were found in 14 of 92 water sources in the Portland public school district, including a handful of drinking fountains.

The six schools with no detectable levels of lead were Lincoln, Parkside, Riverside and Highland elementaries as well as Grants Pass High School and the Gladiola alternative school campus.

Only one test came back positive for trace amounts of lead. A sample collected from a North Middle School drinking fountain reported a lead level of 10 parts per billion, an amount significantly below the EPA lead stan-

dard of 15 parts per billion. "I was very happy with the results," said Sherry Ely, business director for the district.

According to Ely, samples were collected from every drinking fountain and non-bathroom sink at schools.

"Any place where kids could get a drink of water was tested," Ely said.

The rules are different for the city's other three schools: South Middle, Allen Dale Elementary and Redwood Elementary. Those schools get water from private well water, which is federally required to undergo testing once every three years. Those tests have fallen within EPA levels.

In accordance with the EPA's lead collection procedure, samples from last week's testing were collected early in the morning, around 6 a.m. This is to allow water used for testing to sit in the pipes unused for at least eight hours and no more than 18 hours before a sample is taken.

The cost to the district for the lead testing is not yet known. Grants Pass Water Lab typically charges homeowners \$35 per fixture.

Turn to WATER, Page 8A

Water From Page 1A

The testing was voluntary. According to the Oregon Health Authority, schools and child care programs are not subject to testing unless a school district maintains its own water supply. For schools such as Grants Pass that get water from a municipal water source, the decision to test for lead and copper is left entirely to the school districts.

Periodic testing of Grants Pass District schools was conducted in the past if a parent or staff member had concerns. Ely said the results of every previous test were found to be in compliance with EPA lead and copper standards.

The rules are different in the Three Rivers School District,

which includes schools in rural Josephine County as well as Cave Junction and a portion of the Applegate Valley.

Three Rivers schools get their water from private wells at all schools in the district. Wells are tested every three years, per federal regulations.

According to Three Rivers Superintendent David Holmes, all but two schools in the district were tested in 2014. The two remaining sites are scheduled for testing in the summer of 2017.

All Three Rivers schools have tested within EPA limits, officials have said.

The decision to test for lead in the Grants Pass School District

last week was prompted by the incident in Portland Public Schools where elevated lead levels were found in 14 of 92 water sources, including a handful of drinking fountains.

A senior Portland Public Schools manager was put on paid leave because of his role in the district's much-criticized response to high lead levels found at two schools.

The manager resisted testing school water quality and gave false information about the safety of drinking water in schools.

The Portland incident prompted Oregon Gov. Kate Brown to issue a directive to review water quality in schools

that started in April.

The governor's directive includes the participation of the Oregon Department of Education and the OHA. Both agencies will work collaboratively with school districts and child care programs to test drinking water over the summer. The agencies will provide information and technical support.

Grants Pass, OR
 (Josephine Co.)
 Daily courier
 (Circ. D. 11,580)

JUN 17 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

SCHOOL DISTRICTS DECIDE IT'S TIME TO CHECK THE LEAD

744-7

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Eastern Oregon schools will test their water taps for lead, joining a scramble of other Oregon districts who are doing the same.

How long it will take and how much it will cost is unknown — as is the presence of lead in the water.

Federal law does not require schools test for lead, and Oregon law only requires schools with their own water supply to do so. Most districts in Oregon use city water systems, which handle their own testing.

On June 8 the *East Oregonian* asked Blue Mountain Community College and 12 school districts in Umatilla and Morrow counties for test result records and policies. The response was almost universal, with no law requiring on-site testing, there have been no tests nor policies.

Mark Mulvihill, superintendent of the InterMountain Education Service District, said a state law is coming and schools will test this summer.

"It isn't a good answer to say it wasn't a state requirement, but that is what the answer is," he said. "This is all new for us, and we have to do it right ... and we have to be transparent with those results."

Schools are hurrying to test in the wake of large amounts of lead found in the Flint, Michigan city water supply and, more recently, in Portland public schools. The ESD in a written statement Tuesday reported the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority in mid May requested that all school districts that get drinking water from public systems test for lead in school buildings. While public systems test on a regular basis and treat water to help reduce corrosion, lead in pipes and fixtures can enter the water at the tap and later into anyone who drinks from it.

"As a parent, I think 'Why didn't they have their act together?'" Mulvihill said. But before Flint and Portland "were any of us thinking about lead levels?"

Now local districts will test every tap, he said, from drinking fountains in hallways to the faucets in cafeterias and teacher lounges. Outdoor school sites also are on the list and the districts might have to check places such as the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds, which hosts school events.

Umatilla School District already

Staff photo by Kathy Anney

Pendleton, OR
(Umatilla Co.)
East Oregonian
(Cir. D. 8,726)
(Cir. S. 8,888)

JUN 17 2016

Allen's P. O. B. Est. 1888

LEAD: Hermiston tested district schools in 2002-04

Continued from 1A

tested 12 locations at its three schools: McNary Heights Elementary School, Clara Brown Middle School, and Umatilla High School. Superintendent Heidi Sipe said the district had relied on the city of Umatilla's water report for water safety information, but that changed with the events in the metro area.

According to the report, none of the 12 locations had unsafe levels of lead.

The Morrow County School District is testing this week. Superintendent Dirk Dietzen said in an email the district "decided as soon as the news broke in Portland about lead in the water, that we need to test for lead in drinking water."

"Additionally," he stated, "we found a need to develop standard protocols that provide routine safety checks for this concern, develop a comprehensive response plan to address any issues found in all schools and facilities, including a communication plan for delivering the information to parents and the community at large."

Hermiston schools Superintendent Fred Maiocco said in an email

"I believe the rationale is that the municipal sources are regularly tested for quality so schools connected to those municipal sources should be safe."

— Fred Maiocco, Hermiston schools Superintendent

has been no lead reported in city water.

The Pendleton School District also lacks a board policy on testing for lead in water, according to assistant superintendent Fricia Mooney, and the district plans to test this summer.

The city of Helix supplies schools there with water, but Helix Superintendent Darrick Cope said in an email "once it reached our premises, it is hard telling what happens to it as it flows through our pipes."

Helix schools started testing this week and Lone, Milton-Freewater and other districts reported they plan to test and some will create new policies for future testing.

Chemist Beth Read owns Table Rock Analytical Laboratory, Pendleton, which is helping the local districts. The lab is state certified to test drinking water, but not for lead. So Table Rock is working with two other certified labs that

can conduct those tests, Read said.

Table Rock provides everything for testing, she said, from the 250 milliliter bottles to couriers, "so nobody has to worry about anything except taking their samples."

Tests cost \$20-\$25 depending on the number of samples, she said, and the lab offers a discount for volume. Labs try to provide results in 10 business days, Read said, but an increasing number of tests has caused a backlog.

She also said Table Rock has been busier than usual with lead tests. The upswing started with private citizens who own older homes and grew concerned after seeing news reports.

Mulvihill said the schools do not yet know how much it will cost, but state lawmakers in September plan to ask the Legislative Emergency Board to pay for the testing. And testing for harmful elements is not stopping there. School districts have until Sept. 1 to submit plans to the Oregon Health Authority to test for radon.

744-7

Contact Phil Wright at
pwright@astoregion.com or 541-966-0635.

EDITORIAL

No cause for panic, but take precautions

The discovery that some Coos Bay school drinking water shows signs of lead is obviously disheartening. But we shouldn't be completely surprised, nor should we panic. First off, the measurable levels at Blossom Gulch Elementary, as we reported in Thursday's paper, are remarkably low, far below what health experts would consider acceptable. The last time that lead levels were tested in Coos Bay schools 2002, results at that building were negligible, and other schools that showed higher levels are all closed.

The fact is that schools like Blossom Gulch are simply old and have become victims of deferred maintenance because the school district didn't have the money for upkeep.

Our view

Concerned about lead? Talk to your health care professional by decades of recession, the loss of formerly lucrative timber jobs and revenues and conscious decisions about where we would spend what little money we had.

No doubt we would find homes and businesses throughout Coos Bay, North Bend and other communities with detectable lead levels — old structures plumbed when lead solder for water pipes was common.

And since the uncovering of highly dangerous lead levels in schools in Flint, Mich., many states including Oregon are working to make funds and resources available to thoroughly test their own schools and make necessary system upgrades. Oregon schools will be subject to tests this summer.

While we wait for those tests to be conducted and the results to come in, let's remember — pediatric experts say there is no real good level of lead for children.

Developing brains and nervous systems simply don't do well with lead exposure. But it can also be dealt with, many times by simply removing the exposure risk. Other treatment regimens also exist, but the bottom line is that if you're worried about lead exposure with a youngster, see a health care professional. A test is easy to do and can put your mind at ease.

Water tests: Standard for acceptable lead level is 20 ppb

Continued from Page A1

More high lead levels found in water at Eugene schools

drinking fountains and other fixtures, district officials said.

District spokeswoman Kerry Delf provided numbers showing extremely high levels of lead in the water in some locations, including at Sheldon High School and Roosevelt Middle School.

The two-part tests involved taking

Lead in water is a major health concern because high levels can result in serious injury or death. Pregnant women, infants and young children younger than 6 can be especially susceptible. The issue most recently burst to

Turn to WATER TESTS, Page A6

national attention after acidic water in Flint, Mich., corroded pipes and released large amounts of lead into the drinking water.

The standard acceptable amount of lead in drinking water is 12.0 parts per billion. Anything above that is considered elevated, according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Lead typically gets into a drinking water supply by leaching from lead solder that was used to seal pipe joints, or from lead in older metal water lines.

To combat high levels of lead in drinking water, district staff have been flushing out water sources at all district schools every morning before use, as well as providing drinking water to all four sites that show elevated lead until students were released for summer break on Thursday.

The district also shut off water to most drinking fountains early last week. The district plans to hire an environmental firm, PBS Engineering + Environmental to test for lead in drinking water in all schools and facilities this summer and has promised to report results to district families and the community as results from those tests "roll in," Delf said.

The work will cost the district about \$25,000, which does not include additional money that will likely be spent on replacing fixtures where high lead is found.

The Bethel and Springfield school districts will also be testing their water over the summer. All three districts will tap money from their general funds to pay for the work. Officials at the three districts said they began preparing for the tests even before state health and education officials announced a plan last week to encourage school districts across the state to test for lead.

The state's plan is a recommendation, not an order, and does not include any money to help districts, Oregon Health Authority spokesman Robb Cowie confirmed.

Bethel district in west Eugene also plans to hire Eugene-based PBS Engineering to conduct their testing, for about \$10,000. The Springfield District plans to hire Analytical Laboratory Group from Eugene to conduct testing. District spokeswoman Jen McCulley said a total cost estimate is not yet available.

WATER AT EUGENE SCHOOL DISTRICT FIXTURES TESTED FOR LEAD

SHELDON HIGH SCHOOL

Main office fountain

First draw: 68.5 ppb

After flushing: 24.3 ppb

Girls' locker room fountain (at left of entrance)

First draw: 521 ppb

After flushing: 21.1 ppb

Classroom F-5 (art room) fountain

First draw: 58.7 ppb

After flushing: 9.7 ppb

KRVM radio station fountains (by stairs)

First draw: 53.8 ppb

After flushing: 2.6 ppb

ROOSEVELT MIDDLE SCHOOL

B hallway fountain near cafeteria (right side of two-bubbler fountain)

First draw: 679 ppb

After flushing: not detectable

B hallway fountain near bathroom (both sides of two-bubbler fountain)

Left side:

First draw: 87 ppb

After flushing: 2.1 ppb

Right side:

First draw: 26.2 ppb

After flushing: not detectable

B hallway fountain near counseling office (both sides of two-bubbler fountain)

Left side:

First draw: 54.8 ppb

After flushing: 2.5 ppb

Right side:

First draw: 36.5 ppb

After flushing: 6.6 ppb

C hallway fountain near office (right side of two-bubbler fountain)

First draw: 23.3 ppb

After flushing: 2.6 ppb

D hallway fountain near gym (both sides of two-bubbler fountain)

Left side:

First draw: 22.9 ppb

After flushing: not detectable

Right side:

First draw: 240 ppb

After flushing: 9.4 ppb

D hallway fountain near classrooms

First draw: 9.7 ppb

After flushing: not detectable

One fountain in the KRVM radio station near the staircase at the school had 53.8 ppb in the first sample and 2.6 ppb in the second. A fountain in the main office of the high school had 68.5 ppb on the first draw and 24.3 ppb, Delf said.

Roosevelt Middle School

At Roosevelt, water at 25 fixtures was tested.

Fourteen of those showed elevated levels of lead in water after the initial sample of water and four of them reached levels of more than 100 ppb following the first sample taken. After flushing water through the system, all 14 sites showed normal levels, Delf said.

The four sites found to have the highest levels of lead on the first draw included the right side of a fountain near the gym (240 ppb), the left side of a fountain near classrooms four and five (103 ppb) and the right side of the same fountain (122 ppb). The high-

est lead levels were found in a fountain in the computer lab, classroom D-10, which reached lead levels of 866 ppb.

Upon testing each site a second time, after flushing, each site was determined to have levels below 20, district data show.

Kennedy Middle School

Elevated levels of lead were found in three more drinking fountains at Kennedy Middle School following testing at the school last week.

The district had reported that a drinking fountain in the library of the middle school contained high levels of lead — 122 parts ppb — following the first sampling. After the water was flushed, there were no detectable traces of lead, Delf said.

A second fountain, in the H locker bay at the school, had initial lead levels of 31.5 ppb. After flushing the water through the system, lead dipped to 4.3 ppb, Delf said.

Water in one other drinking fountain in the G locker bay also had elevated

lead levels. The first test found levels of 220 ppb. After flushing it was 22.7 ppb. District staff tested a total of 14 fixtures that provide drinking water at Kennedy after traces of lead were determined to be present in another fountain at the school in April.

District Education Center

Initial tests completed on eight kitchen and breakroom sinks at the District Education Center

showed elevated lead levels in four of them. A faucet in the library services reached lead levels of 76.3 ppb. The second test showed no detectable lead levels. Another faucet in the support services records area showed levels of 24.7 ppb after the first draw and 6.9 ppb after flushing. The north faucet in the Wellness Clinic showed 63.3 ppb in the first sample and 4.2 ppb in the second.

744-7

Follow Alisha on Twitter @alisharoemeling

Email alisha.roemeling@registerguard.com

Eugene, OR
(Lane Co.)
Eugene Register Guard
(Circ. D. 51,890)

JUN 18 2016

affiliated P.C.B. Est. 1888

Source: Eugene School District

Medford, OR
(Jackson Co.)
Medford Mail
(Circ. D. \$1,500)

JUN 18 2016

AGENT'S P.C.E. EST. 1888

PUBLIC EDUCATION

A different school test

Districts are ramping up testing of water in their buildings 744-7

By Teresa Thomas
Mail Tribune

School districts are testing water for lead in school drinking fountains and faucets across the Rogue Valley.

The testing was recommended by the Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Department of Education just weeks after startling results from Portland Public Schools' tests, conducted over the last seven years, came to light.

Those results showed that at least one drinking fountain in 51 of the district's schools was dispensing water with lead levels exceeding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "action level" of 15 parts per billion or 0.015 milligrams per liter. Two Portland schools, Rose City Park School and Creston Elementary, had drinking fixtures dispensing water with up to three times the federal action level.

Since then, many local districts have scheduled tests of a cross section of water fixtures at each site this summer.

The Medford School District tested most of its water fixtures between 2006 and 2008. At that time, tests at Jefferson Elementary revealed unacceptable lead levels of 0.015 to 0.017 milligrams, resulting in a replacement of the school's plumbing system.

"From that point on, we've used a system of spot checking," said Ron Havniar, the district's support services and facilities manager. "We would test four samples at every elementary school and eight to 10 at every secondary school during the summer to give us an idea if and where there are issues."



Kim Ramsey, vice president with Neilson Research Corporation, sorts through school water samples Thursday at the laboratory in Medford. MAIL TRIBUNE / JAMIE LUSCH

"Recent concerns have raised public awareness, but this is not reactionary. It's a construction project that will distinguish the district's water supply or when there is a broken pipe or other plumbing issues," explained the district's spokeswoman, Nettie Hurd.

There are about 60 water fixtures at elementary schools, said Chief Operator's Office, Brad Earl.

SEE TESTING, A4

TESTING

From Page A1

The Eagle Point, Phoenix-Talent and Rogue River school district also have ordered tests of a handful of fixtures at each school this summer.

The Phoenix-Talent School District has collected samples at Talent Elementary and expects the results next week. It will collect samples from its other schools over the next few weeks, in April. In an email dated April 14, Sisk informed district staff that all of the fixtures tested were "way below" the EPA's action level.

Sisk included the analytical results from Neilson Research Corporation in the email. Two samples were taken at Bellview and Willow Wind Community Learning Center, three at Helman and Walker elementary schools, five at Ashland High School and four at Ashland Middle School. The lead levels ranged from "none determined" at one Ashland Middle School fixture to a high of 0.0052 at a Helman Elementary fixture.

In the Eagle Point School District, only Shady Cove School and Lake Creek Learning Center are tested regularly. Shady Cove Schools is on a well and is tested every three years for lead and copper. Lake Creek Learning Center's water is trucked in and is tested annually for contaminants. No issues have been reported at either school, Whitman said.

Rogue River Superintendent Paul Young said the district tests its water, although not specifically for lead, on a regular basis and will conduct lead tests on water faucets and fountains and the Gold Hill schools, and submitted those samples to Neilson Research, Steele said.

According to the results, which the district received Wednesday afternoon, all 30 fixtures tested were safe. Lead levels ranged from "none determined" to a high of 0.015.

"To date, testing water for lead is not a requirement for schools," Steele said. "I think the Oregon Legislature is changing that and I am fully in support of routine testing for lead and copper."

For the last two years, Neilson Research has been overwhelmed by the number of water samples coming in from school districts and has had to expand its hours and hire to seven days a week from a evening shift to meet the demand, said Kim Ramsey, the laboratory's vice president.

Because of client privacy agreements, Ramsey could not comment on how many samples had been tested, which school districts were clients and what the results were.

"All I can say is we're a certified lab, and we're busy," she said.

She said the laboratory charges most school districts \$20 per sample to test for lead and copper.

According to the EPA, exposure to even small amounts of lead can cause low IQ, hearing impairment, reduced attention span and poor classroom performance in kids, who are more susceptible to the toxic metal.

water faucets and fountains this summer. Young said he does not expect any lead problems, because the district has recently upgraded to modern, eco-friendly, filtered fountains. "We are as anxious as anyone to see reports confirming that our water is safe and healthy," he said.

Ashland School District Facilities Coordinator Gary Sisk said the district is changing that and I am fully in support of routine testing for lead and copper."

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According to the EPA, exposure to even small amounts of lead can cause low IQ, hearing impairment, reduced attention span and poor classroom performance in kids, who are more susceptible to the toxic metal.

"On June 2nd, our maintenance department collected samples (according to protocol from Neilson) from a range of sources at all in-town schools

Reach education reporter

Teresa Thomas at 541-

776-4497 or thomas@

mailtribune.com. Follow

her at www.twitter.com/teresthomas_mt.

744-7

City will test some buildings for lead

The decision follows elevated levels of the toxicant being found at four Eugene schools

By CHRISTIAN HILL
The Register-Guard

The city of Eugene is testing drinking water at its older recreation centers and other public buildings following reports of elevated lead levels at four Eugene public schools. A consultant tested the water at Sheldon Pool and Community Center earlier in June, and the city switched to bottled water at that venue as a precaution. The results are expected early this week. The pool and community center are next to Sheldon High School, one of the schools where testing found elevated lead levels in water collected from numerous fountains. The estimated cost of the testing at Sheldon Community Center and pool is \$1,500. Lead typically gets into drinking water by leaching from lead-containing pipes or from lead soldering that was used to seal weatherline joints or attach fixtures to water lines. Public awareness about lead started after acidic water in Flint, Mich., corroded water lines and fixtures and released lead into the drinking water. The additional Eugene testing initially will focus on community centers, pools and

Turn to LEAD, Page B5

Lead: Springfield hasn't done testing

Continued from Page B1

other buildings popular with the public, including Amazon Community Center, Echo Hollow Pool and the Hult Center.

"Based on what we've seen locally with the school district and concerns that have risen nationally, we felt it was prudent to take a similar approach to (the Eugene school district) and test our older facilities that could be at risk for lead exposure," said Jeff Perry, the city's facilities manager, in an email.

Perry said officials continue to review the list of centers that need immediate testing, and "it could be quite a few."

In addition, the Willamalane Park and Recreation District in Springfield said it plans to test the drinking water at its major centers, including its recreation

center and its two swimming pools.

The city of Springfield hasn't done any testing but may look into doing it given the recent public attention about lead in water, spokesman Niel Laudati said.

"We haven't had complaints about it," he said.

The city of Eugene is focusing its testing on buildings constructed before 1986 because that was the year Congress amended federal law to prohibit the use of pipes and solder not deemed "lead free" in public water systems and plumbing in centers that provide drinking water.

The Eugene Public Library isn't being tested, because it opened in 2002.

Eugene Water & Electric Board spokesman Joe Harwood said lead could be in the pipes and solder that carry water between a property's water meter and a building's plumb-

ing system.

"Just because the home is new to you, don't assume the plumbing is new," he said.

EWEB reports it has no known lead service lines in its distribution system and treats its water to reduce its corrosiveness.

The utility reported in its most recent water testing report that the level of lead in the water it diverts from the McKenzie River and treats for customers is well below federal standards. Lead is a naturally occurring metal found deep in the ground.

EWEB has expanded information about lead in water in its latest water quality report and specifically noted its lead readings in the separate

testing report.

"We thought it would be the right thing to do for our customers to call more attention to it," Harwood said.

Low levels of lead in the blood of children can result in behavioral and learning problems, slowed growth and anemia, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

744-7

Follow Christian on Twitter @RGchill. Email christian.hill@register-guard.com.

Local lab can test your water for lead

Have you been concerned about the quality of your tap water for drinking with all the stories about lead and other metals that might be in it? How many different things should I test for to make sure, and is it expensive?

—Bill F. Medford 744-7

You could do a simple test for lead and copper, which many of the local schools are doing right now. Medford-based Nelson Research Corporation, which conducts many of the local tests, charges \$38 to test for lead and \$24 for copper.

If you want more thorough test, you could try the plumbing toxicity package, which will run you \$38. It checks for cadmium, chromium, copper, iron, lead, nickel and zinc, as well as pH levels and the hardness and conductivity of the water.

Other tests that run more than \$200 test for up to 10 to 16 trace metals and other issues. High lead levels, as you may be aware, can cause developmental problems with children. Symptoms of lead poisoning could include headache and aching bones. High copper levels can cause stomach irritation and vomiting.

Send questions to "Share Your Asked," Mail Tribune Newsroom, P.O. Box 1106, Medford, OR 97501, by fax to 541-776-4376, or by email to yourasked@mailtribune.com. To see a collection of columns, go to mailtribune.com/yourasked. We're sorry, but the volume of questions received prevents us from answering all of them.

Medford, OR
(Jackson Co.)
Medford Mail
(Circ. D. 51,500)
JUN 20 2016
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Portland, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
The Oregonian
(Circ. D. 247,833)

JUN 22 2016

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EDUCATION

Lawmakers work to protect Oregon children from lead

REPS. JENNIFER WILLIAMSON and ALISSA KENY-GUYER IN OUR OPINION

For the past few weeks, parents, teachers, students and community members have been

rightfully shocked and outraged about the fact that water in some Portland Public Schools facilities tested for high levels of lead, and that the public wasn't told about these levels for some time. As legislators who represent the Portland area, we're outraged as well.

Protecting the health and safety of our children should be at the very top of our priority list. Parents should be assured that they are sending their children off to learn in safe environments.

The facts are still being investigated, but it's clear that several parts of the process at PPS broke down or were simply inadequate to keep our kids safe and the public informed. That must be fixed. Bringing in an outside firm to investigate the potential personnel failures is a good first step. We're awaiting the results of that investigation, and we fully expect that district leaders and the Portland School Board will act swiftly and appropriately to correct the problem and restore the public's trust. But the revelations over the last few



BETH NAKAMURA/STAFF

Caution tape is wrapped around a handrail in the auditorium of Cleveland High School in Southwest Portland. Lead paint was found peeling off the ceiling and onto the seats below.

weeks have also shown that there's more we can do in the Legislature to ensure that children across the state have safe, clean water and air. State education and health officials have recommended that all public schools and day care centers test their water for lead this summer. To make sure that happens, legislative leaders from both parties in the House and Senate have committed to make state funds available if school districts lack the funds to immediately test for lead contamination. In the longer term, we need to establish clear statewide rules and expectations

for regular lead testing in our school facilities. In the 2015 legislative session, Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, D-Portland, and Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, brought together a work group to tackle the problem of radon testing in schools. Their work resulted in House Bill 2931, which requires school districts across the state to come up with a plan to test for radon in rooms used by students and to provide the results to the public. Now, we need to do the same thing to ensure that districts have a plan for lead testing and for informing the public quickly.

Lastly, and most importantly, we need to address the root cause of the contamination: outdated, under-maintained school facilities. Many students attend schools that are old and haven't been updated in any significant way due to a lack of funds. Lead contamination is just one of the symptoms of this problem; students, teachers and staff are also dealing with mold, indoor air quality concerns and structural issues that leave buildings unready for an earthquake.

By creating clear statewide guidelines about when and how water and air should be tested, creating strong rules about how the public (parents, students, teachers, staff and community members) should be notified, and partnering with districts to find the resources to clean up the contamination, we can begin to rebuild trust that our facilities are safe for our kids.

Democrat Jennifer Williamson of Portland represents House District 36. Democrat Alissa Keny-Guyer of Portland represents District 46. This op-ed is co-signed by Reps. Rob Nosse, D-Portland, Barbara Smith Warner, D-Portland, Jessica Vega Pederson, D-Portland, Lew Frederick, D-Portland, Shemia Fagan, D-Clackamas, Kathleen Taylor, D-Portland, Mitch Greenlick, D-Portland, and Ann Liringer, D-Lake Oswego.

Schools may face required lead tests

Proposal would make Oregon the second state with policy

TRACY LOEW 744-7
STATESMAN JOURNAL

The Oregon Department of Education could require school districts to test for lead and other contaminants in schools under a new rule under consideration by the state Board of Education.

"Every child has a right to learn in an environment that is safe. Any threat to the health and safety of a child in any school or classroom is unacceptable," Gov. Kate Brown said in a statement Tuesday.

Earlier this month, ODE and the Ore-

gon Health Authority urged schools and childcare programs statewide to test for lead in their drinking water this summer.

But they admitted they had no authority to require the tests, and the plan did not include funding to help pay for them.

Legislative leaders have since said they will ask the state Emergency Board to help cover the cost for schools, although that amount likely won't cover all of the testing.

The issue of lead in water has been under scrutiny after the entire city of Flint, Michigan was poisoned by lead leaching from pipes.

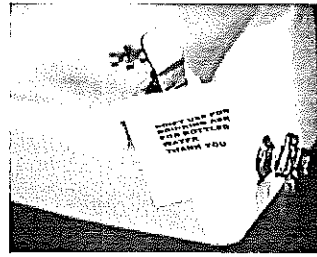
High lead levels recently have been found in schools across the country, including in Portland, Beaverton, Eugene and Lake Oswego.

If the board adopts the rule, Oregon would be the second state to require lead testing in schools statewide, following New York.

The proposed rule would allow ODE to require testing not just for lead, but for other contaminants, such as radon.

The Salem-Keizer School District already announced plans to test every

See LEAD, Page 3A



MOLLY J. SMITH / STATESMAN JOURNAL
A sign on a shut-off water fountain at Valley Inquiry Charter School reminds students to ask for bottled water if they are thirsty.

Lead

Continued from Page 1A

school and administrative building.

Testing was scheduled to begin June 20

and be complete by Aug. 19.

The district is posting testing results on its web site at <http://www.salemkeizer.org/parents/water-testing-informa>.

The Oregon Health Authority plans to collect

school testing results statewide and make them available to the public in an online database.

The proposed rule will be considered at the Oregon Board of Education meeting Thursday. It was added to the agenda on

Tuesday. The meeting begins at 9:15 a.m. at 255 Capitol St. NE in Salem. The board will discuss the proposed rule at approximately 11:45 a.m. **744-7** tloew@statesmanjournal.com, 503-399-6779 or follow at [Twitter.com/Tracy_Loew](https://twitter.com/Tracy_Loew)

Salem, OR

(Marion Co.)

Salem Capital Press

(Cir. W. 38,765)

JUN 22 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Eastern Oregon School Districts to Test Drinking Water for Lead this Summer

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888
JUN 23 2016

Pendleton, OR
(Umatilla Co.)
Pendleton Record
(Cir. W. 882)

School districts across eastern Oregon will be testing their drinking water this summer to determine if lead contamination exists. Some districts have already completed testing. Currently, there are no state or federal requirements for schools to test drinking water for lead, and it has not been a practice in the past. In mid-May, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) created a plan regarding lead in school water. The plan requests all school districts that get drinking water from public water systems test for lead in school buildings; requires districts to use certified drinking water testing labs to process the water samples; asks ODE and OHA to develop a method for schools to report results to OHA; and for OHA to provide drinking water expertise to schools for support as they test.

Many schools receive their water from community or city water systems. These public water systems regularly test the water and many already treat the water to help reduce corrosion of plumbing. However, lead that is present in pipes and fixtures in building plumbing can enter the water at the tap and expose those who drink it—that is why sampling and testing for lead at each tap is important.

Larry Glaze, superintendent of the La Grande School District, said the district has started the testing process in their school buildings and will share the results with the community when they are completed. "Student safety is our number one concern, and we are incorporating scheduled periodic testing for lead in drinking water into our five-year maintenance plan," Glaze said. Any drinking water from a tap above acceptable lead limits will be addressed, and district administration is communicating clearly with local media, Glaze said.

Morrow County School District has also begun the testing process. "MCSD decided as soon as the news broke in Portland about lead in the water that we need to test for lead in drinking water," said Dirk Dirksen, superintendent. "Additionally, we found a need to develop standard protocols that provide routine safety checks for this concern, develop a comprehensive response plan to address any issues found in all schools and facilities, including a communication plan for delivering the information to parents and the community at large," Dirksen said.

Some state funds may be available in fall 2016 to reimburse school districts who test their drinking water this summer. Mark Wuivhill, MIESD superintendent, said the important thing is to help school districts get this testing done. "The MIESD is committed to supporting our 18 component districts with whatever they need to test their drinking water and ensure we are doing everything possible to ensure students and staff are safe," Wuivhill said.

For more information about the plan to support school districts, please visit the Oregon Health Authority at <http://www.oregon.gov/ohah/news/>.

MESD scrambles to test for lead, radon

District switches to bottled water until test results are in

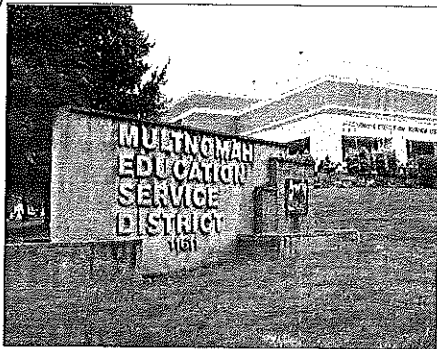
By SHASTA KEARNS MOORE
The Tribune

As the firestorm raged over lead levels found in the water at some Portland Public Schools buildings, Multnomah Education Service District officials quietly began looking for their own test results from their six school sites.

Finding precious little evidence of any past testing or remediation, they sent off samples for testing in early June.

Multnomah ESD directly educates fewer than 500 students, who qualify for specialized services based on disabilities, behavioral problems, learning difficulties or other special needs.

On June 9, Multnomah ESD Superintendent Scott Perry ordered that the district's three



TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO
Multnomah Education Service District, which will soon welcome its fifth leader in the past two years, is trying to get on top of potential lead and radon contamination at its schools for students with special needs.

older school buildings use bottled water, pending the results of lead testing.

Those measures were still in effect at press time.

Wheatley School, which serves students with disabili-

ties in Multnomah County, is the only school for which Multnomah ESD officials could find previous water lead test results when they began looking in late May.

The results showed one fa-

cet was at 19.7 parts per billion of lead in a February 2015 test.

The Environmental Protection Agency considers action should be taken in a school at the 20 parts per billion level, or 15 parts per billion in the public water supply.

The difference is because in a public water supply, regulators are looking for a system-wide need for corrosion control treatments, but at a school they are trying to identify dangerous fixtures. Health experts say there is no safe level of lead, particularly for young children whose neurological development can be stunted by the heavy metal.

The Parkrose School District leases the Wheatley building in the Russell neighborhood of Northeast Portland to Multnomah ESD.

The Parkrose superintendent said they were previously unaware of Multnomah ESD's high test result from 2015.

New tests conducted June 6 showed Wheatley fixtures to be below the action level.

The district tested a sample of three or four fixtures at each site. Jim Rose, the district's chief operating officer, said comprehensive test results are coming, as is a long-term plan.

"Our team is developing a testing regimen for water, air, radon, etc.," he said. "Full de-

tails will be worked out in the coming months after this initial need for testing is completed."

A women's restroom sink at Helensview rang in at the highest count of this month's tests — a 19.7 ppb result, just below the limit.

Multnomah ESD leases three buildings that were all built before the 1986 ban on lead in plumbing materials: Helensview (1954), Wheatley (1956) and Wynne Walls (1936). The three buildings the district owns were built after those bans on lead in pipes and solder: Ainsworth (1989), Arata Creek (2001), and Burlingame Creek (2000).

Test results for Wynne Walls, which is owned by Albertina Kerr Centers, were not available by press time.

Tumultuous leadership

Many questions still remain about the comprehensiveness of past lead testing and the strategy moving forward.

Stephen Marc Beaudoin, Multnomah ESD board vice chair and spokesman, said the district is doing the best it can as quickly as it can.

"I think every district is grappling with this," said Beaudoin, adding that the board is interested in learning as much as it can about past efforts

around water quality and strategies for ensuring that clear

records are kept.

"With the churn of leadership, it's been very hard to track down answers, but we want to," Beaudoin said. The district will install its fifth leader in the past two years in a couple weeks. Its last two permanent superintendents resigned under separation agreements.

Beaudoin said the board doesn't know yet why Wheatley was tested and if any remediation was done.

But Beaudoin also pointed the finger at the state, noting that the revelations in Portland Public Schools have caused nearly every public agency in the state to start wondering what toxins could be in the air and in their drinking water.

"We have no guidance. There are no guidelines. Zero," he said. "We, like everyone else, are sort of making it up in absence of any guidance from the state."

The Oregon Health Authority, under direction from Gov. Kate Brown in April, is developing standards for testing of schools for lead.

Beaudoin said the Legislature is likely to take up the issue during next year's session, and school officials plan to advocate for standards — and funding — for lead testing.

shasta@portlandtribune.com

Portland, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
Tribune
(Cir. 2xW. 180,000)

JUN 23 2016
Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

PPS closes pool, cafeteria due to lead, radon concerns

A small inner Southeast Portland swimming pool is the latest to fall victim to Portland Public Schools' battle with lead.

The Buckman Indoor Pool, which is managed by Portland Parks & Recreation but maintained by PPS, was found by a Multnomah County inspector to have peeling lead paint in the locker rooms, the district announced Friday.

As part of the same announcement, the district noted that its earlier estimate of nine school rooms needing radon gas remediation is now revised upward to 16 rooms. The Ore-

gon Health Authority recommended a lower threshold for action, resulting in the additional rooms now qualifying for fixes.

Even after running the HVAC system 24 hours per day, a Portland Public Schools alternative high school is still testing high for radon.

The district has been ventilating the rooms continuously since. The strategy seems to have worked to get rid of the cancer-causing, naturally occurring gas for all but the cafeteria at the Meek campus of Alliance High School, off Northeast Alberta. Follow-up

testing revealed radon at 11.9 picocuries per liter. The Environmental Protection Agency considers 10 picocuries per liter to be an actionable level.

The Oregon Health Authority considers 8 picocuries per liter to be an action level for schools, triggering PPS' announcement Friday that seven more rooms will need remediation.

The Meek cafeteria is closed until it can be fixed.

Another 114 rooms have enough radon that the district will monitor them over the next nine months to see if further remediation is needed.

— Shasta Kearns Moore

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888
 JUN 2 5 2016
 (Circ. D. 247,833)
 The Oregonian
 (Multnomah Co.)

NEWS UPDATE |
 Lead in schools

The Oregon Board of Education signaled a general agreement Thursday with a proposed rule that would give it the power to require all schools to test for lead and to set forth a plan to ensure safe water, air and physical spaces. Board members will vote on the requirement in August, after seeking feedback from district officials and the public.

The new rule, considered by the board Thursday at the behest of Gov. Kate Brown, would give them the authority to require testing — but not the money to pay for it. One of the board's only serious questions: Is approving the plan in August moving too slowly? Board member Jerry Colonna, former Beaverton superintendent, posed that question, but was reassured testing is being conducted broadly before the requirement is official.

Board members also noted concerns about how school districts would pay for the testing and any fixes that are needed. But they did not consider that a reason not to move ahead. The next step is for the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority, in consultation with the federal Environmental Protection Agency and other health watchdogs, to come up with a "model" safety plan school boards can adopt. It would address what to test, in addition to radon and lead in drinking water, lead chips on playgrounds, air quality in classrooms, peeling paint inside schools, falling hazards, the presence of lead dust anywhere on school grounds, among others — and how often to measure them. Officials plan to write that model plan by early August so they can get schools' feedback before the final vote on the rule.

— Betsy Hammond

Water

Continued from A1
 The district tested one sample at each of its 38 facilities. All the samples came back below Oregon Health Authority's lead threshold of 20 parts per billion.

Full results are posted on the district's website. At 32 sites, results came back as "not detected," which indicates levels below 2 parts per billion. Two schools — Amity Creek Magnet and Highland Elementary — reported levels between 2 and 5 parts per billion. The same was true for the district's main office, transportation office, warehouse and maintenance facility.

The testing cost the district \$900. Other districts in Central Oregon are in the process of testing their schools' water. In Redmond, samples were taken from six schools, but results were not in as of Thursday. All schools in Jefferson County School District have had samples taken and are awaiting testing, and the Crook County district planned to test its schools over the summer.

Sisters School District tested its schools this spring and did not find unsafe lead levels. Earlier this month, the Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Department of Education recommended all school districts and child care facilities test for lead in their water, and legislative leaders said the state could help pay for testing. OHA also said it would compile a database of lead test results from accredited labs.

This week, Gov. Kate Brown announced plans to require districts test for lead in drinking water, paint, dirt and dust and publish results annually. Under a new state law, schools will also be required to test for radon, and Brown wants them to monitor air quality and reduce exposure from hazardous waste sites.

The Oregon Board of Education heard about the plan at its August meeting. Previously Bend-La Pine relied on testing by the water systems that supply its schools. Those are required to do regular testing for lead, though samples do not have to come from schools. Lead contamination could also come from plumbing in the schools that off-site tests would not turn up.

"We think this was a good way to take a general look at the quality of water in all our school sites," Repman said. "We'll continue to monitor the governor's plan and continue testing if necessary."

— Reporter: 541-617-7837
 oregonnews@bendbulletin.com

Bend, OR
 Deschutes Co.
 Bend Bulletin
 (Circ. W. 27,547)
 JUN 2 4 2016
 Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

BEND-LA PINE SCHOOLS

Tests show safe water at district schools

By Abby Speegman
 The Bulletin
 Testing of drinking water throughout Bend-La Pine Schools this month turned up no unsafe levels of lead, the district announced Thursday.

Following the lead water crisis in Flint, Michigan, schools across the country started testing their drinking water. In Portland, district officials have accused the district of withholding test results that show elevated levels of lead in the water. Tests at schools in Eugene, Beaverton, Gresham and elsewhere have also turned up elevated levels.

"We wanted to use an abundance of caution and be proactive after hearing news that lead was found in the water supply in Portland," said Julianne Repman, a spokeswoman for Bend-La Pine.

See Water /A4

McMinnville, OR
 (Yamhill Co.)
 McMinnville News Register
 (Circ. 2XW. 8,808)
 JUN 2 4 2016
 Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Y-C schools clear of lead

By STARLA POINTER
 Of the News-Register 744-7
 YAMHILL — If you want to find any lead in other Oregon districts Yamhill-Carlton Schools, you'll need to look at the pencils, not the water.

District officials found no lead during recent testing of water from fountains, faucets and other sources. "We thought we might be in trouble," said Superintendent Charan Cline, given the age of the district's three school buildings and its auxiliary facilities.

"But there's no lead," he said. "We're pretty excited about that." Although Cline said potential lead problems were probably eliminated with work financed out of a bond approved in 2001, "They did a lot of plumbing re-roofing, so they must have gotten rid of any lead then," he said.

Still, he worried when other Oregon districts started finding lead in their water supplies. "We bought bottled water just in case," he said.

The district purchased an optical testing meter that disclosed no problems. Just to be sure staff members collected samples and sent them to a lab for analysis. Tests confirmed what the meter had indicated: No lead.

In fact, he's not worried about pencils, either. "Although we commonly use the term 'lead' to describe the core of the ubiquitous writing instrument, it's actually fashioned of soft, gray graphite. And, unlike lead, graphite has no adverse effect on health."

JUN 26 2016

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

Proactive lead testing

744-7

IAN CAMPBELL | The News-Review

Douglas County schools will test the level of lead in the water while school is out for the summer

Douglas County schools will spend the summer testing for lead after the national spotlight exposed alarming levels of the heavy metal in Flint, Michigan and in Portland.

Gerry Washburn, superintendent for Roseburg Public Schools, said the district will be testing every spicket where students could drink water or access water for cooking in all 11 schools. The results of those tests are expected to be released by the end of August.

While Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has announced plans to require annual reports about lead levels in the state's schools, Washburn said his

district took a proactive approach and had already put a testing schedule in place shortly after the Flint crisis. That event left about 99,000 residents affected after a water supplier switched the city's water source from the Detroit Water Authority to the Flint Water System. The new river water leached away a protective coating inside the pipes, allowing lead from the pipes to get into the water supply.

"We were looking at Flint and thought, 'Look, this is something we need to be able to look people in the eye and tell people we've tested for it,'" Washburn said.

By August, the district will have submitted between 700

to 800 water samples — one from each faucet, spicket or nozzle — for testing. So far, the district has spent about \$1,700 on the first round of testing, but Washburn says at \$22.50 a test, he expects to spend around \$16,000.

Washburn said he's hopeful the governor's plan includes a way to fund the tests, otherwise, he isn't sure how schools across the state would afford the tests, or worse, budget for improvements to educational programs.

"I'm supportive of the governor's stance that we need to know whether our buildings are safe, but every time I do

LEAD, A10

Rust on pipes could mean contaminated water. Douglas County schools will be testing the lead levels in their respective water systems this summer. THINKSTOCK

LEAD

From page A1

something like this that's money I can't put toward paying teachers or improving instructional programs," he said.

Overall, Washburn said he doesn't expect any alarming test results to come back. After talking with the city's water department, he was reassured the department has never encountered a lead test that exceeded the allowable limits.

Yet even school districts in more rural areas of the county are gearing up for summer testing in preparation, or in response to, the national attention.

Days Creek Superintendent Mark Angle said his school, Days Creek Charter School, falls into a fairly unique category when it comes to water testing.

"We don't have any municipal water out here so we actually rely on a mountain spring across the road that goes through our own treatment plant," he said.

Because of that, Angle said the water that flows through the city and the school is treated frequently all year long.

Nevertheless, the school, which resides in a town of roughly 350 people, will ramp-up its testing this summer to ensure students, parents and staff that the water is lead-free and safe to drink.

"Typically we don't test every single water source because we're testing to make sure the water we've treated is safe, so this round will be more extensive in that we're checking at every single point of service along the water line once it gets into the building," Angle said.

Angle also had concerns

about the financial burden the testing may put on schools, but agreed with Washburn about the importance of knowing for certain.

"It's something we need to do to make sure our

is unacceptable. Local school districts and public charter schools also have the obligation to ensure transparency and accountability to parents and communities."

Kate Brown
Oregon Governor

students have access to safe water while they're at school," he said.

But Douglas County's school districts aren't the only ones testing water spickets and pipes.

Oregon's 197 school districts could spend summer break cranking procedures for testing lead, radon and other chemicals at their campuses ahead of Oct. 1, when the plans would be handed over to the state.

These "Healthy and Safe Facilities Plans" were announced Tuesday by Brown, who said she directed the Oregon Department of Education to draft requirements for testing and monitoring the health and safety of campus buildings that otherwise don't exist for schools at the state or federal level.

Brown's directive comes after last month's disclosure of high lead levels found in drinking water at two Portland schools, igniting community outcry after the earlier Flint, Michigan, water scandal had brought national attention to the

The Oregon Department of Education will discuss the draft rules during its next meeting, and is accepting the public's input through Aug. 17.

"Any threat to the health and safety of a child in any

school or classroom is unacceptable," Brown said in a statement, adding that as state-level agencies respond to the crisis, "local school districts and public charter schools also have the obligation to ensure transparency and accountability to parents and communities."

Under the preliminary

rules, school districts would submit plans for testing water, air quality and hazardous waste sites — paying attention to lead and radon specifically — with any results reported annually to the state and disclosed to the community online.

The draft rules don't say how often these tests should occur, but Amy Wojcik, spokeswoman for the education department, said schools will go by whatever testing frequency is recommended by a federal regulatory agency.

"So if it's an Environmental Protection Agency guideline, it'll be whatever the EPA regulations are," Wojcik said.

Information on potential costs or funding sources for those costs was not immediately available.

744-7

Reporter Ian Campbell can be reached at 541-957-4309 or icampbell@mtcnet.com. Or follow him on Twitter @McCampbell17. The Associated Press contributed to this report.

JUN 28 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Education board to adopt new rules to test for lead, radon

Requiring schools to monitor, post results yearly will boost costs

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

Oregon's Board of Education is fast-tracking adoption of a new rule that requires schools to test for lead and radon and report those results to the public.

The rule came on the heels of a scandal in Portland Public Schools over lead in drinking water that went unreported, and a directive by Gov. Kate Brown.

"I think an additional layer of checks and balances when we are talking about student safety (is needed), so I think this will make parents feel much better," said board chairwoman Miranda Sumner.

The board heard a first reading of the rule Thursday and plans adoption Aug. 17. A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for Aug. 2. The requirement will entail additional costs to schools and the Oregon Department of Education. The Legislative Fiscal Office is working on an estimate on what those costs will be. Legislative leadership has asked the Emergency Board to allocate money to pay for it.

Brown in April directed the Oregon Department of Education and Oregon Health Authority to review existing requirements for environmental testing and address the problem of lead in drinking water.

During the review, health and education officials learned that neither the education department nor the health authority has the power to require schools test for lead, said Emily Nazarov, operations policy analyst with the education department's government and legal affairs section.

'Unfunded mandates?'

The health authority has the power to require testing of pub-

lic water systems, but schools are excluded from the agency's jurisdiction. The proposed rule would require school districts, charter schools and education services districts to conduct lead and radon testing and to submit an environmental monitoring plan to ODE for keeping water, air and physical spaces safe for students and staff.

The health authority already had the right to require schools to test for radon, but the new rule will provide comprehensive guidance to schools on all of the testing required. Schools will be required to report their

test results to the education department and to the community annually.

"I'm supportive of this, but I am also thinking this is like the iceberg with only the tip visible and there is a lot of it unseen, and it can become very quickly a nightmare," said school board member Samuel Henry.

Henry said if the Legislature doesn't approve additional funding for implementing the rule it could be another one of those "famous unfunded mandates."

The agencies asked schools to test for lead during the summer. All of the districts have either completed or are in the process of testing, Nazarov said. The agencies recommend that schools identify sources of lead, stop access, communicate results to staff, students, parents and the community and mitigate and repair the problem.

"Districts are doing a lot of this already," Nazarov said.

"Portland (Public Schools) mentioned at one of the meetings one of their learning points is to make sure you are documenting this. Repairs are done. People leave organizations, and nobody knows that the repair was done or when it was done, and that information is lost. This is a way to make sure there is a record that the community has access to and that that info is available."



"I think this will make parents feel much better."

- Oregon Board of Education Chairwoman Miranda Sumner.

JUN 28 2016

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Smith to retire from PPS helm — in a year

First test results show high lead levels in Humboldt water

By SHASTA KEARNS MOORE
The Tribune

It's been a busy week for Portland Public Schools, and school isn't even in session.

Superintendent Carole Smith announced suddenly last Tuesday that she plans to retire in 2017. Smith said in an open letter that it was her plan all along to retire in her 10th year and that the board had asked her to stay on while it developed a plan for her replacement.

This seemed to come as a surprise to board member Paul Anthony, who told several news outlets that the board was informed of this decision after the fact. Under Oregon law, the superintendent is employed at the discretion of the board.

District management, including the superintendent's role, is under a \$50,000 investigation into the lead water crisis that is expected to be completed in early July.

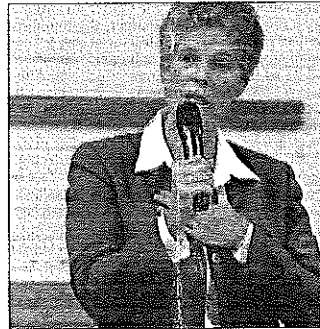
The district sent the announcement of Smith's planned retirement minutes before a rally began, demanding her resignation.

Don't Shoot Portland began the protest at the Harriet Tubman School (Faubion K-8), in Northeast Portland. The approximately 100 protesters later interrupted school board proceedings at the school district headquarters with angry chants.

In the wake of high levels of lead discovered in school drinking water and radon found in school buildings, parents are saying district officials have violated their children's civil right to education. Organizers of last week's march say parents should be filing civil rights complaints.

The state board of education is putting adoption of new mandates for lead and radon testing — and reporting results to the public — on the fast-track.

Also last week, the first water test results came in for Humboldt, a shuttered school that will be opened for the Kairos



Superintendent Carole Smith announced last week that she would be retiring in another year. TRIBUNE PHOTO: JOR HOUSE

charter school this September, The Oregonian reports. The report says that nearly half of the school's water fixtures tested above the limit for lead in drinking water.

District officials have promised to post the results of this summer's testing of all of its schools on its Healthy Schools website, but the results for Humboldt had not been posted by press time.

Possibly due to a backlog in the area's water testing facilities, the district announced its plan for water delivery next school year as it anticipates not all of the fixtures will be cleared by

then for drinking or food preparation.

The school board voted to contract with CH2M Hill, a large engineering and architectural firm, to help inform a plan to combat the lead problem.

Union members celebrated an up to \$250,000 plan for blood lead testing of any school employee who requests it. Staff previously were told to visit a health care provider at their own expense if they were worried about exposure.

shasta@portlandtribune.com, News partner KOIN 6 news contributed to this report.

IS SCHOOL WATER

SAFER?

7447
By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

Local schools are testing their water taps for lead, joining a scramble of other Oregon districts who are doing the same.

Schools are hurrying to test in the wake of large amounts of lead found in the Flint, Michigan, city water supply and, more recently, in Portland public schools.

Local districts testing after lead problems elsewhere

Federal law does not require schools to test for lead. Although the Oregon Department of Education is working on a new rule, current Oregon law only requires schools with their own water supply to test. Most districts in the region use city water systems, which handle their own testing. While public systems test on a regular basis and at water to help reduce corrosion, lead in pipes and fixtures can enter a water at the tap and later into anyone who drinks from it.

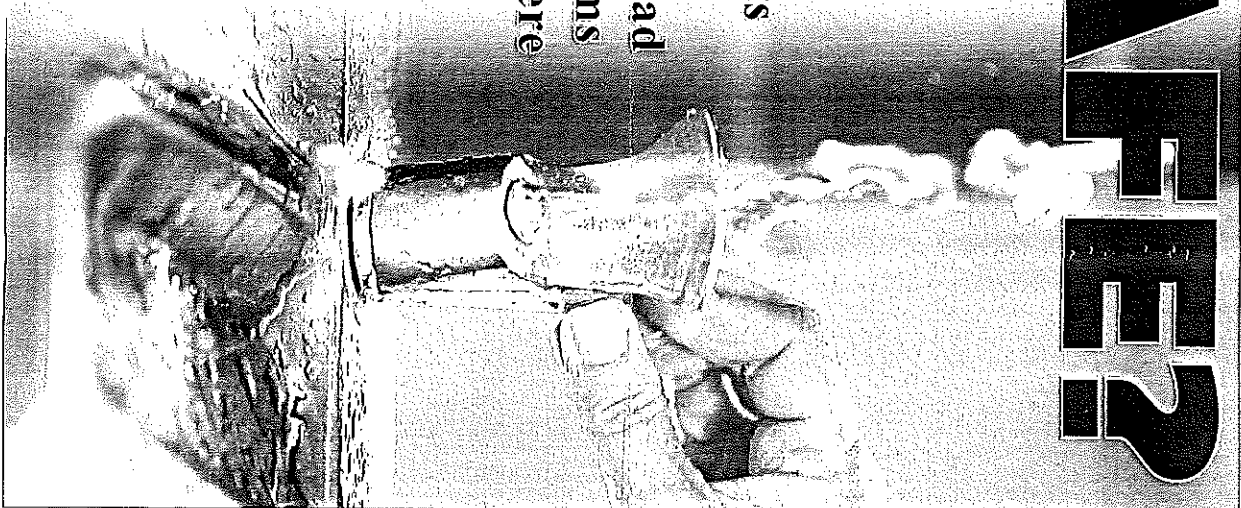
The Eagle asked all of the school districts in Grant County for records lead tests. Dayville was the only district that had completed testing, but other districts indicated they plan to test soon.

Dayville tested the elementary, high school and gym drinking fountains and the kitchen sink. June The results were sent back from the R. Water Analysis Laboratory in Dayville June 24.

"Dayville Schools passed the lead test, well within accepted (Environmental Protection Agency) levels," permanent Kathryn Fredrick reported Tuesday.

The EPA's maximum allowed level of lead in drinking water is 0.015 milligrams per liter. The highest level recorded in Dayville was .00374.

See LEAD, Page A10



EO Madeleine Groulx/Kenny Army
Most area school districts are testing for lead in drinking water at the schools this summer.

John Day, OR
(Grant Co.)
Blue Mountain Eagle
(Cir. W. 3,000)

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Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

LEAD

Continued from Page A1

Grant School District Superintendent Curt Shelley said testing is scheduled in June for all three schools, Seneca, Humbolt Elementary and Grant Union Junior-Senior High.

"Testing facilities are swamped right now, and it may take longer than expected to get results," he said. "With the recent findings in Portland Public Schools and a few others around the state it has been brought to the attention all school districts really need to test for the safety of all. We have not tested for lead in my

tenure as superintendent (one year); however we will plan to test on a regular basis moving forward."

Prairie City School District Superintendent Julie Gurczynski said she authorized the testing of drinking fountains and cooking water earlier this month and expects the testing to be complete within the next month.

Long Creek School District Office Manager Jennifer Garinger said the school will be testing for lead, but she did not know when.

Monument School District has not responded to the Eagle's record request.

The districts will also need to develop a plan to test for

radon by this fall, as the Oregon Board of Education is fast-tracking adoption of a new rule that requires schools to test for both lead and radon and report those results to the public.

The board heard a first reading of the rule Thursday and plans adoption Aug. 17. A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for Aug. 2.

The requirement will entail additional costs to schools and the Oregon Department of Education. The Legislative Fiscal Office is working on an estimate on what those costs will be. Legislative leadership has asked the Emergency Board to allocate money to pay for it.

directed the Oregon Department of Education and Oregon Health Authority to review existing requirements for environmental testing and address the problem of lead in drinking water.

During the review, health and education officials learned that neither the education department nor the health authority has the power to require schools test for lead, said Emily Nazarov, operations policy analyst with the education department's government and legal affairs section.

The health authority has authority to require testing of public water systems, but schools are excluded from the agency's jurisdiction.

The proposed rule would require school districts, charter schools and education services districts to conduct lead and radon testing and to submit an environmental monitoring plan to ODE for keeping water, air and physical spaces safe for students and staff.

The health authority already had authority to require schools to test for radon, but the new rule will provide comprehensive guidance to schools on all of the testing required. Schools will be required to report their test results to the education department and to the community annually.

Phil Wright and Paris Achen contributed to this report. 744-7

Lead paint could pose danger 6/30/15

Portland schools now doing lead paint assessment

By SHASTIA KEARNS MOORE
The Tribune

As the fury over tainted water supplies dies down, Portland Public Schools board member Steve Buel says he doesn't want the district to forget about lead paint dangers.

Facilities and Asset Management Senior Director David Hobbs says it could cost about \$870,000 to remediate the 20 worst sites for lead paint in PPS. Hobbs says most of the district's buildings are older than 1978, when the ban on lead paint took effect.

"Yes, from the age of our buildings, we do have lead paint in our buildings," Hobbs told the school board June 21.

"So, how many buildings do you think we have lead paint in?" Buel asked Hobbs.

"They are doing that assessment as we speak," board chair Tom Koshler responded.

The district spends \$125,000 annually on lead paint abatement, according to Hobbs. They also have received a \$50,000 grant for the past several years

from the Portland Water Bureau for lead paint abatement.

The schools covered by this year's grant will be: Appleton, Chief Joseph, Dunthorn, Irvington, Sacajawea and Whitman.

Buel said he was disturbed that this wasn't a higher budget priority.

"Maybe we need to go borrow a million dollars," he said. "But we should be taking care of these particular sites. They're just too important to not do."

In order to borrow money, the school district would need voters to approve a construction bond. As reported by William the Week, Hobbs said the total cost to repair all the environmental dangers — including asbestos, lead, seismic upgrades, radon, etc. — at PPS tops \$400 million.

Elsewhere, in other Portland school districts, Multnomah Education Service District says it does not have any lead paint test results for any of its six school sites, three of which were built before the 1978 lead paint ban.

Parkrose School District, which leases two schools to MESP, has a 15-year-old program to paint over any peeling paint, but has not tested for lead paint in that time. Adventure Kerr, which leases the Wynne-Watts school to MESP, did not have any paint test results. The lead tests on its water came back below federal action levels.

Grants Pass, OR
(Josephine Co.)
Daily courier
(Circ. D. 11580)

JUN 2 2 2015

Grant's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Governor wants annual toxics reports from Oregon schools

By AP and the Daily Courier



Oregon's 197 school districts could summer break crafting procedures for testing lead, radon and other chemicals at their campuses ahead of Oct. 1, when the plans would be handed over to the state. These "Healthy and Safe Facilities Plans" were announced Tuesday by Gov. Kate Brown, who said she directed the Oregon Department of Education to draft requirements for testing and monitoring the health safety of BROWN campus buildings that otherwise don't exist for schools at the state or federal level.

Brown's directive comes after last month's disclosure of high lead levels found in drinking water at two Portland schools, igniting community outcry at a time when the Flint, Mich., water scandal has brought national attention to the issue.

The Oregon Department of Education will discuss the draft rules during its next meeting Thursday, and is accepting the public's input through Aug. 17.

"Any threat to the health and safety of a child in any school or classroom is unacceptable," Brown said in a statement, adding that as state-level agencies respond to the crisis, "local school districts and public officials also have the obligation to ensure transparency and accountability to parents and communities."

Under the preliminary rules, school districts would submit plans for testing water, air quality and hazardous waste sites — paying attention to lead and radon specifically — with any results reported annually to the state and disclosed to the community online.

Grants Pass School District officials announced last week that recent testing of drinking water found no levels of detectable lead at nine of 10 schools in the district. Contrary to previously published results, all 10 schools in the district, those who get their water from the city of Grants Pass along with those that use private wells, were tested for lead two weeks ago.

Turn to TOXICS, Page 9A

Toxics From Page 1A

Only one test came back positive for trace amounts of lead. A sample collected from a North Middle School drinking fountain reported a lead level of 10 parts per billion, an amount significantly below the EPA lead standard of 15 parts per billion.

The testing was ordered following the Portland incident in which elevated lead levels were found in 14 of 92 water sources, including a handful of drinking fountains in the Portland Public School District. This prompted the directive issued by the governing body.

Every school in the Three Rivers District receives its water from private wells. Because of this, lead and copper testing is done every three years, as required by federal regulations. According to Three Rivers

Lead tests on schools in safe zone

More County school, facility results to come by COURTNEY ANDERSON



The lead and copper levels tested in four Klamath County schools' water were found well below what the Environmental Protection Agency considers dangerous, according to a Klamath County School District.

KCSD is testing all schools' and facilities' lead and copper levels. So far, the district received results that showed the water is safe for consumption from Mazama High School, Shasta Elementary, Stearns Elementary and Peterson Elementary.

"We're very happy with the results of our first four locations," KCSD Superintendent Greg Theede said. KCSD is testing its water after Portland and surrounding areas found lead in their drinking water. "We just want to be proactive and be ahead of the game, and want to be as transparent as we can be through the whole process," Theede said.

The district received results from Ferguson Elementary as well, but will re-test the site because of sampling errors.

Klamath Falls, OR
(Klamath Co.)
Klamath Falls Herald News
(Circ. D. 13-119)
JUN 2 8 2016
Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Lead from A1

Since mid June, KCSD took 130 samples from 20-plus schools, according to a press release. The district expects to receive the other schools' and facilities' results in the coming weeks.

LEAD AND COPPER LEVELS

Lead levels are 15 parts per billion (ppb) or above, the EPA requires schools to repair or replace faucets or plumbing.

KCSD took samples from water fountains, kitchen faucets and sinks, nurses' stations and staff room sinks and sent the samples to Spring Street Analytical. Of the 22 testing sites, it found 19 samples between zero and three ppb. Three sites had more than three ppb but were below eight ppb.

The highest lead test result came from Stearns Elementary nurses' station at 7.8 ppb, and the lowest from Viking Babes daycare program at Mazama High School with 0.2 ppb. The EPA's limit for copper is 1,300 ppb. All four schools tested far below that level.

The highest copper level was found at the Mazama High School nurses' station

with 61.5 ppb. A Stearns Elementary water fountain had the lowest copper levels, containing 1.57 ppb.

THREE-YEAR PLAN

KCSD is formulating a three-year plan to replace fixtures throughout the district because many of facilities fixtures were put in place decades ago.

Besides Hanley Elementary School that opened in January, the most recently built school was over 40 years ago.

"If we don't take a proactive stance, sooner or later we're going to have those issues," Theede said. "So we want to get ahead of the game." KCSD plans on replacing all faucets in water

fountains and sinks in kitchens, nurses' stations and staff rooms. The estimated cost for the replacements is about \$125,000.

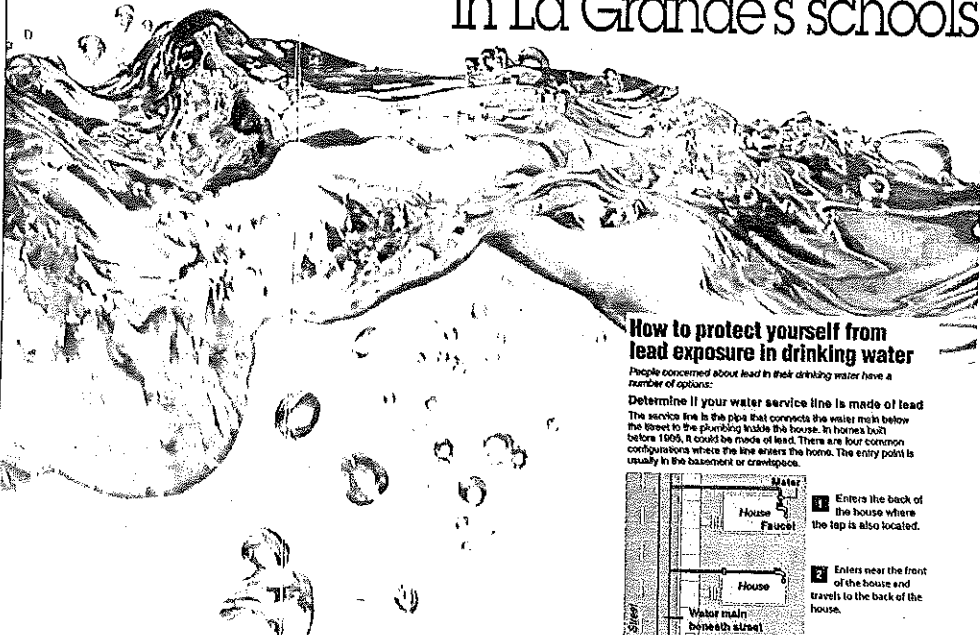
Throughout summer, Theede said KCSD plans to finish planning and begin implementing the project. canderson@heraldandnews.com on Twitter @Cinder-sorHNV

Striving for lead-free

744-7

WATER

in La Grande's schools



La Grande School District starts process of lab testing on water from outlets in its buildings

By Dick Mason
The Observer

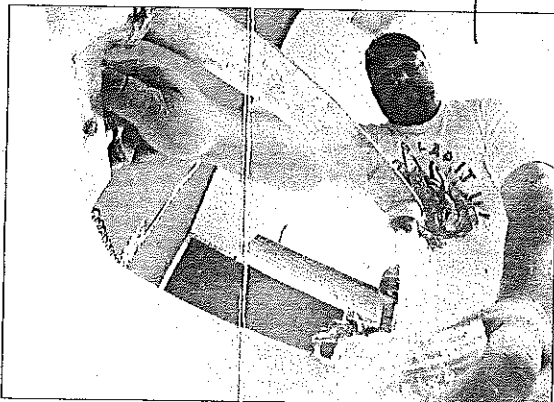
The La Grande School District is starting the painstaking process of getting its water tested for lead.

Members of the school district's custodial staff have counted and recorded location information about all water outlets in the district's school buildings. About 400 water outlets were counted and

recorded, said Joseph Waite, the school district's bond and facilities manager. Water outlets counted included drinking fountains and sink faucets.

The count information has been sent to several water testing labs in the region for price quotes. The lab making the best offer will be selected by the school district to conduct the testing. Samples from each of the school district's water fixtures will then be sent to the lab for analysis.

See Testing / Page 5A



Tim Mustoe/The Observer

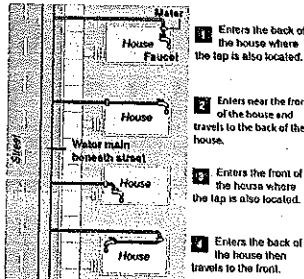
Central Elementary School custodian Gary Krantz pours water from a sink in one of the classrooms at the school. Krantz counted and recorded how many water outlets are in the school.

How to protect yourself from lead exposure in drinking water

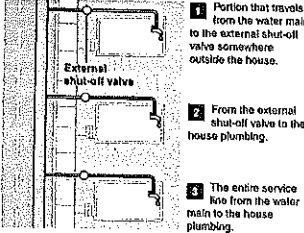
People concerned about lead in their drinking water have a number of options:

Determine if your water service line is made of lead

The service line is the pipe that connects the water main below the street to the plumbing inside the house. In homes built before 1995, it could be made of lead. There are four common configurations where the line enters the home. The entry point is usually in the basement or crawlspace.

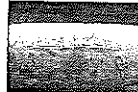


Three areas where lead may exist along the service line



How to identify a lead service line

A lead service line generally is dull gray in color and the metal is very soft. If you take a key and carefully scratch the surface of the pipe, the area will turn a bright silver color if the pipe is lead.



Check where the service line is connected to the plumbing. If it's lead, there will be a bulb shape where it was soldered at the end. There will also be a compression fitting or other connector made of galvanized iron, brass or bronze.



Actions you can take

- Be aware of work that can disturb the service line: Construction, water main replacement or service line repair can loosen up lead, contaminating the water flowing into the house.
- Run water before use: Especially important if the home's water has not been used for several hours. The time varies based on the length of the lead service line. Five minutes will considerably reduce the amount of lead.
- Use only cold water: For drinking, cooking and preparing baby formula.
- Purchase a water filter: Make sure it is certified to remove "total lead."
- Replace the entire lead service line.
- Change faucet screens: Fouling clean screens at the tip of the faucet, as sediment and metals can collect there. The components should unscrew easily.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency, American Water Works Association

Graphic: Chicago Tribune/7/85

TESTING

Continued from Page 1A

La Grande School District Superintendent Larry Glaze said the results will be announced soon after the tests are completed.

"Our goal is to have lead-free water. We may already be achieving this goal," Glaze said.

Should lead be detected at any source, the district will take immediate action to correct the problem. This could involve replacing pipes or shutting off drinking fountains or sinks.

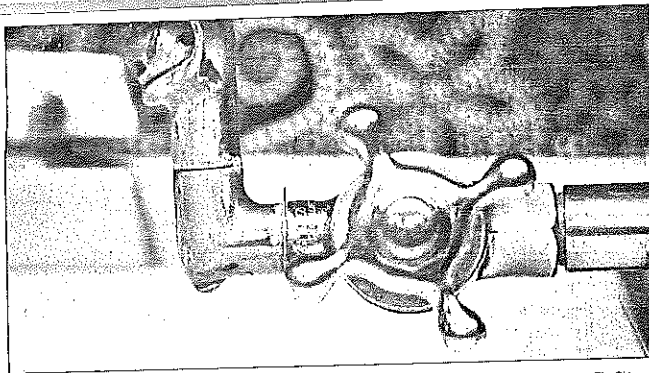
Should pipes have to be replaced, the expense could be high. It is a cost, though, that the district will not shy away from.

"We can't equivocate when it comes to student safety," Glaze said.

He said the school district would take money out of its general fund to cover the cost even though no money has been budgeted for it.

Gov. Kate Brown recently asked all Oregon school districts to test their water for lead. Brown issued her recommendation not long after lead was detected in the water of schools in the Portland school district.

Glaze noted that there is a possibility that the Legislature's Emergency Board may



Tim Mustoe/The Observer

Samples from all of the approximately 400 water fixtures in the La Grande School District's buildings were sent to a lab for analysis as part of the district's mission to determine the lead levels in the buildings' water.

allocate additional funding to school districts for lead testing. Glaze said any such funding would be welcome.

"(The call for testing) falls under the category of another unfunded requirement from the state," Glaze said.

He said if money is granted from the Emergency Board, it would probably be for testing only and not cover steps like pipe replacement.

Mark Mulvihill, superintendent of the InterMountain Education Service District, said the important thing is to help school districts get this testing done.

"The IMESD is committed to supporting our 18 component districts with whatever

they need to test their drinking water and ensure we are doing everything possible to ensure students and staff are safe," Mulvihill said in a news release.

IMESD serves all of Union County's school districts, including Union, which is also set to begin testing its water for lead.

Union School District Superintendent Carter Wells said his school district will do its testing with assistance from the City of Union.

"We will be working closely with the city," Wells said.

On the higher education front, Eastern Oregon University will be among the

state universities testing its water for lead this summer.

"EOU has not had issues in the past, but we are planning to run tests on drinking fountains over the summer and planning to install new filters that screen out lead, regardless," said Tim Seydel, EOU's vice president for university advancement.

EOU, like the La Grande School District, gets all of its water from the City of La Grande, which tests regularly for lead and other contaminants.

"We exceed by far the state and federal standards for quality," said City of La Grande Public Works Director Norm Paulus.

744-7

LaGrande, OR
(Union Co.)
The Observer
(Circ. 3xW. 5,260)

JUN 29 2016
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(Lane Co.)
Eugene Weekly
(Circ. 2M, 35,850)

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Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

CASH-STRAPPED SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PAY FOR LEAD TESTING

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say "there is no known safe level of lead in a child's blood." Effects of lead poisoning include developmental delays, memory loss and brain damage.

The discovery of lead in drinking water in Portland public schools so soon after the lead crisis in Flint, Michigan, ignited alarm in schools across the state of Oregon, including those in Lane County.

Kerry Delf, associate director for communications for Eugene School District 4J, says that after tests this spring showed excessive levels of lead at the district office and three schools — Sheldon High School and Roosevelt and Kennedy middle schools — 4J has hired PBS Environmental + Engineering to test all water faucets used for drinking and making food district-wide.

4J last tested its drinking water for lead in 1998, Delf says, when it found and fixed the locations "where water samples were identified for concern." Those same locations were tested this year.

Delf says the district-wide tests will cost an estimated \$25,000 or more, and the money will come from 4J's general fund, with no state dollars yet available to help.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA), which oversees many state health care programs, has never required school districts to collect water quality data unless they use a well, and Oregon school drinking water has not regularly been tested by the districts themselves. OHA is currently discussing guidelines or standards for school districts to follow.

"Think about how disturbing it is that the goal of sending children to school is to educate them to be productive members of society, and lead is a barrier to that," says Lisa Arklin, executive director of the environmental justice nonprofit Beyond Toxics.

For public water supplies, the EPA recommends acting on lead levels of more than 15 parts per billion (ppb). For schools, since testing protocol differs, the action level is 20 ppb. The district sampled each fixture twice, once after the water set overnight and again after flushing water through the system.

The highest lead levels — 866 ppb and 521 ppb — were found at a Roosevelt fountain, which is being demolished, and at Sheldon. After being flushed with water, most fixtures registered below the EPA's action level, but three were still above that level.

PBS Environmental + Engineering will test the buildings already tested by the district. Joel Hoag, environmental justice and community outreach manager for Beyond Toxics, says he's concerned that kids in low-income communities might be at greater risk because they are more likely to live in older homes where lead is already an issue. Malnourishment also worsens the effects of lead poisoning.

"I don't think schools should be blamed," Arklin says. "They didn't have guidance and they don't have the budget that allows them to deal with this problem."

Delf says testing is underway, and once complete, the district will release the test results and determine the lead source. Delf says that based on the results of the preliminary testing, fixtures like faucets and sinks are most likely to blame for the presence of lead, in which case the district will replace fixtures and test again. If the problem is not resolved, the district will need to take further action.

"The follow-up to the testing will be important," Hoag says. Springfield and Bechtel districts are also testing school drinking water. Until testing is complete, it's unclear how much repairs will cost the districts.

Keep up with 4J's progress at 4jlane.edu/news and learn more about lead poisoning at epa.gov. —Amy Schneider

School board OKs \$1.25M to test blood for lead

By Becky Hammond
The Oregonian/OregonLive

The Portland school board Tuesday to spend up to \$1 million to test for lead in the blood of 14,300 students and employees using mail-in kits.

That comes on top of the board's decision two weeks ago to spend \$250,000 for more than 3,300 in-person tests to be conducted at schools in July. The dates and locations for those tests will be decided and made public by Friday, said Yousef

Hammond, the district's chief financial officer. School district leaders agreed to those unusual and expensive measures in the wake of revelations that the school district provided lead-tainted water in sinks and fountains in many schools and left even more dangerous lead paint dust and debris untreated at some schools.

David Hobbs, senior director of facilities and asset management, told the school board his department does not yet know which schools

pose the highest lead paint risk to students and employees, but they are working to figure that out.

Testing for lead in the water in every drinking fountain, sink and faucet in Portland Public Schools will be completed by Friday, Hobbs said. Test results will be released as soon as the district receives them, said Amanda Whalen, chief of start to Superintendent Carole Smith.

Additionally, after the recession hit in 2008, Oregon had to make hard choices about what we could fund. Building maintenance and improvements are typically paid for by pressing bonds, and it was difficult to move projects like that when money was so tight statewide. As a result, renovations for buildings were put on the back burner, leaving environmental issues in our schools to get worse.

Testing will show that we need renovations and that they will be significant in some cases. There is a mechanism in place to secure the funding we need for needed improvements: Initiative Petition 28.

The initiative is a gross receipts tax that will apply to businesses that make more than \$25 million per year in Oregon sales including businesses like McDonald's, Bank of America, and Comcast, that can easily afford a modest increase in their tax burden.

This tax would generate approximately \$2.3 billion dollars over the next biennium, with the promise that those funds would be used for education and health care funding.

That's money that could make a huge difference in fixing the pipes in our old school buildings statewide, as well as making other improvements to protect our students. You can learn more about IP 28 at achetoregon.org.

While Portland Public Schools were the first to uncover lead in their drinking water, we're already seeing this in Eugene and in other districts around the state as they start to test as well.

We need to come together and properly fund necessary improvements to get these metals out of our drinking water. That way our kids can attend school safely and develop into capable young adults.

Representatively Speaking: Lead in our schools

By Steve Remsen/TIMMY ROE NOSSE

Lately it seems that Oregon, long touted as progressive when it comes to the environment (we are the state that launched the bottle bill), has faced one environmental disaster after another.

First it was heavy metals in our air, then the oil trains, and now lead in our schools. As a Portland Public Schools parent, I share the concerns of my neighbors about the health of our children.

Like many of you, I am anxiously awaiting the independent investigation and report to the school board. In the meantime, we know that the status quo is unacceptable, and needs to change.

Long-term exposure to lead is harmful, especially to young minds that are still developing. I'm thankful the House and Senate leadership announced they would ask the State's Emergency Board help schools pay for lead testing. While this doesn't solve the problem, it will help us to see the full scope of the problem, and how it impacts Oregonians statewide.

Unfortunately, many of Oregon's public schools are housed in old buildings, constructed during a more lenient era for building codes at times when we knew a lot less about the harmful effects of lead than we do

now. Additionally, after the recession hit in 2008, Oregon had to make hard choices about what we could fund. Building maintenance and improvements are typically paid for by pressing bonds, and it was difficult to move projects like that when money was so tight statewide. As a result, renovations for buildings were put on the back burner, leaving environmental issues in our schools to get worse.

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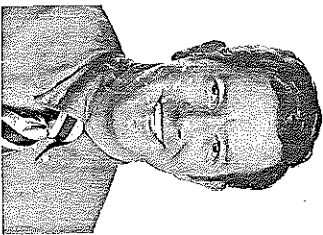
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