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After 2nd test, lead still an issue at Amity Creek

By Kalley Flicicaro
The Bulletin

Bend-La Pine Schools plans to replace hardware on all drinking fountains and a classroom sink at Amity Creek Magnet and remove the spigot off a drinking fountain and faucet from a sink at La Pine Middle School after getting back results from a second round of tests for lead in drinking water.

After test results last week showed somewhat elevated levels of lead in water from two fixtures at the two schools, the school district had all drinking fountains and food preparation sinks at both the sites retested for lead. The drinking fountain that originally showed elevated levels of lead at La Pine Middle School with 28 parts per billion showed 9 parts per billion in the second test, falling within EPA guidelines — the EPA's action level on drinking water is 20 parts per billion. But the district is removing the spigot of the problem drinking fountain and taking off the faucet of a sink in the same room. At Amity Creek, the district will be replacing hardware on all drinking fountains and a classroom sink this month.

The problem drinking fountain at La Pine Middle School was in a classroom

used only for storage, according to Julianne Repman, Bend-La Pine Schools communications director.

Lead levels elsewhere in the school fell within what the EPA considers safe. For that reason, the district plans to turn water back on at La Pine Middle School today. The middle school has been using bottled water for drinking and used water from the nearby high school to cook with since it got the first results last week.

Making sure the water is safe for consumption again at Amity Creek is going to require more work.

Before retesting for lead levels at Amity Creek, the district turned the shut-off valves underneath all of the classroom sinks and drinking fountains on and off to move the metal hardware and see whether it would stir up lead in the water supply. "That elevated most of the readings," Repman said, adding that leads the district to believe there probably is lead in most of the shut-off valves underneath drinking fountains and sinks.

Now, the district plans to replace all the shut-off valves, as well as the faucets for food preparation sinks and drinking fountains over Thanksgiving break later this month.

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Lead

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After replacing the hardware, the district will flush the system and test for lead a third time. If those tests show that elevated levels are gone, the district will turn on water again at the school.

As at La Pine, the district has supplied bottled water for drinking at Amity. Cooking wasn't taking place on-site

anyway, because the school's kitchen is being remodeled. Food is delivered from the district's production kitchen in Bend.

At Amity, the water to the drinking fountains is turned off. Hand washing or showering with water with slightly elevated lead levels is OK, according to the EPA. Plus, Repman said, Amity's bathrooms were all recently remodeled, and the hardware in those

bathrooms is new.

The district estimates replacement of hardware will cost about \$350 per drinking fountain or sink, of which there are eight total. The district has received results only for its 14 facilities built before 1980. Results for facilities built during or after 1980 probably will be available in a couple weeks.

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Tests reveal lead in GBHS water fountains

By Jayati Ramakrishnan
Pilot staff writer

Three water fountains at Gold Beach High School were shut down this week after testing of water sources at Central Curry School District campuses showed they contained higher than acceptable levels of lead.

Those fountains will be repaired and retested by Christmas, said

Superintendent Roy Durfee.

"Three tested high, so we're taking steps to make the necessary repairs," Durfee said. "This was only at Gold Beach High School — everything at Riley Creek was fine."

The state-mandated minimum threshold for lead contamination is 20 parts per billion. The fountains tested at 30, 60.4 and 124 parts

per billion.

Durfee said the repairs will cost around \$1,000, which will come out of the school's general fund.

Two sinks at Brookings-Harbor School District were shut down for high lead levels this summer after conducting tests. The tests in Gold Beach and Brookings came after some schools in the state found signifi-

cant levels of lead in their water, and testing became mandatory in August 2016, when the state implemented the Healthy and Safe Schools Plan.

Every school district must develop a plan to test for lead in drinking water and, if it's found, a plan to reduce the levels. All results must be released to the public.

Halfway, OR
(Baker Co.)
Hells Canyon Journal
(Cir. W. 968)
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Lead Levels in Pine Eagle School District Meet Federal Guidelines

The Pine Eagle School District announced the results of recent tests for elevated lead levels in the Pine Eagle Charter School's drinking water at its regularly scheduled board meeting on Monday, November 14, 2016.

According to the Districts announcement, the testing was conducted in all three school buildings in October by school personnel following federal and state guidelines. Samples were sent to a state-certified laboratory for analysis. The results were received by the School District and released within five

business days.

Forty sites were sampled throughout the District. Twenty-one sites tested negative for any lead and nineteen tested positive for trace amounts below the acceptable levels set by federal guidelines. Pine Eagle has elected to retest all nineteen sites to ensure the District's drinking water is safe. Any elevated lead levels above the federal guidelines will be addressed immediately by the School District.

Pine Eagle's lead testing program was instituted to ensure that drinking water

in the school system is safe for children, staff and patrons of the district. Water with high lead levels can contribute to negative health effects, especially in young children.

Information about the lead testing program, including the laboratory results, is available at the district office located at 150 W. Bell St. in Halfway, Oregon. The District office is open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The laboratory results are also available on the District website at www.pineaglestd.org.

Lead testing reveals problem fixtures

WSD has fixed drinking water fixtures, officials say

By Julia Connes
The Independent

Nearly one in 12 water fixtures at Woodburn School District buildings had concentrations of lead higher than the federal limit of 20 parts per billion, test results released in September show. It was the first time the district had ever performed lead testing on the schools' water fixtures.

The testing was conducted over the summer, following guidelines released by the Oregon Health Authority as part of a statewide plan to prevent lead poisoning in schools. Fixtures whose water samples had lead concentrations higher than 20 parts per billion were immediately repaired or shut off, the district said.

"There are only two fixtures left in the district where we have not yet identified the source of the lead," said Ivan Leigh, maintenance supervisor for the district, last week. Leigh said that both of those fixtures are currently disabled.

The test results were posted to the district website. Letters were sent to parents addressing the results for individual schools.

"In the first round of testing, we focused on drinking water

fixtures and found seven that required fixing," Superintendent Chuck Ransom wrote in a post on the district's website. "Those fixtures were disabled and repairs have been made."

Ransom wrote that in the second round of testing, "some ancillary fixtures" were found to have elevated levels of lead.

But further analysis of the results paints a more dramatic picture: Over 8 percent of the 1,039 fixtures had lead levels of at least 20 parts per billion, the federal limit for water from individual fixtures. (Note: the commonly used EPA action level of 15 parts per billion is intended for system-wide lead concentrations in public water sources).

Water from a shower fixture at Valor Middle School had a lead concentration of 590 parts per billion — 29 times the 20 parts per billion threshold. Water from a hallway drinking fountain at Lincoln Elementary School had a lead concentration nearly 12 times that threshold.

As a whole, the results may be skewed higher because of the range of fixtures tested: The district tested every water fixture at the schools, including ones not used for drinking water, like outdoor hose bibs. Even showers generally aren't a source of lead poisoning — human skin can't absorb lead.

"We went over and above," said Leigh. "We tested things not covered under the testing

protocol."

But some fixtures not identified as drinking water in the test results, such as classroom sinks, could have been used to fill water bottles — and a number had high concentrations of lead.

The sample from a sink in Room 104 at Woodburn High School had a lead concentration of 262 parts per billion, while water from the sink in Room 14 at Lincoln had 279 parts per billion, nearly 14 times the threshold.

Ransom said that's why the district decided to test every water fixture in the schools, not just ones designated for drinking.

"There's no way to stop a person from filling up a water bottle in a sink that isn't necessarily designated for drinking," Ransom said.

According to the Oregon Health Authority, lead exposure is especially dangerous in children and can have lifelong effects. Some symptoms of lead poisoning in children include tiredness or loss of energy, hyperactivity, irritability or crankiness, reduced attention span, poor appetite, trouble sleeping and more.

"The effects of lead on a child can be permanent and irreversible," the Oregon Health Authority website reads. "Even small amounts of lead can be harmful."

Two schools stood out for their high levels of lead overall:

French Prairie Middle School, where 21.4 percent of fixtures produced samples with lead concentrations over 20 parts per billion, and Lincoln, where water from 26.2 percent of fixtures had lead concentrations over 20 parts per billion.

Those schools, which share a campus, are some of the oldest buildings in the district. French Prairie was built in 1952 and Lincoln was built in 1962.

Leigh said that the reason could be that the schools' fixtures may not have been replaced recently.

"It can be hard to gauge," Leigh said of why a school might have higher lead levels. "Sometimes an older school has newer fixtures, since they

were recently replaced. Sometimes they still have the original fixtures."

Ransom said that often there's a direct correlation between how frequently a fixture is used and how much lead is in the water from that fixture. The less frequently used fixtures tend to have a higher amount of lead build-up, Ransom said.

Leigh said that in the vast majority of cases at the schools, the source of lead in the water was the fixture itself, and the problem was remedied by replacing the fixture.

Though this was the first time the district had tested for lead, Ransom said that it won't be the last.

The Oregon Board of Education has asked schools to submit yearly facility safety reports, including test results for lead concentrations. And Ransom said that over the next few years, construction for the bond projects will involve frequent retesting of water fixtures.

"Most of us would like to see those numbers at zero, that is the true goal," Ransom said. "But for now, we're taking care of the biggest problems and areas of greatest concern."

Julia Connes covers all things Woodburn. She can be reached at 503-765-1195 or jconnes@woodburnindependent.com.

NM water now safe, district says

Last month, the North Marion School District removed water dispensers from its schools after retest results from water lead tests came back with acceptable levels.

August samples of several sinks in the district came back with results above the state threshold of 20 parts per billion, so the district issued bottled water dispensers at every school as a precaution.

"We suspect the elevated levels were from six weeks of inactivity in the water supply system in those buildings between the July and August testing dates," explained Superintendent Boyd Keyser in a

letter to parents.

Since then, subsequent tests have shown all drinking fountains are below the required state level. No drinking fountain in the district has registered more than 20 ppb, Keyser reiterated. However, North Marion Middle School still has classroom fountains for which the district is still waiting on test results, so the district has restricted use of those fountains for drinking purposes.

"We will continue to test our water outlets and if any outlet registers above the acceptable level it will be decommissioned, modified and retested," Keyser said.

Districts push ahead with water tests for lead

7/14-7

In the Schools

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Mailheur Enterprise
(Circ. W. 1,511)

By John L. Brasse
The Enterprise

VALE — While the Vale School District wraps up its final round of testing for lead in the water supply, the Adrian and Jordan Valley school districts have ordered testing bottles to begin testing at sites across their districts.

Vale received its second round of 40 tests back with results showing lead levels two water lines above the accepted limit. One faucet in the Vale Middle School band room tested high and the other location occurred in the Vale Elementary School library.

These two tests join four earlier tests that showed high levels of lead in the water. After the earlier tests, water lines at Willow-creek have been replaced and the water retested.

Faucets at the elementary Learning Center are currently on back order and once installed, retesting will occur. The faucets remain off limits meantime.

"We are working on the problems that we saw in the first round of testing and will now take action on the second round of testing," said Vale School Superintendent Scott Linneberger.

The districts are testing after a change to the Safe Water Drinking Act changed the maximum allowable lead content in 2011. Water tested across the wared surfaces of pipes, pipefittings, plumb-

What can YOU do ...

If you suspect lead contamination of your water, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advise the following:

- Flush pipes for two minutes or longer before using
- Use only cold water for eating and drinking
- Boiling water will not clear lead contamination
- Use water filters or treatment devices on the water line
- Human skin does not absorb lead in water so bathing or showering is allowed

ing fixtures and fixtures cannot now exceed 0.25 percent. For soldered surfaces and flux, the amount increases to 0.2 percent.

The testing is taking place in the districts because high levels of lead in water cannot be seen, tasted or smelled.

In children, high levels cause behavior and learning problems, lowered IQ and learning problems, delayed growth, hearing problems and anemia. It also impairs the formation and function of blood cells and in rare cases, death.

Testing in humans is done through a simple blood test.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that public health actions be initiated when the level of lead in a child's blood is 5 micrograms per deciliter or more.

"We receive a report more when lead is found in paint than in the water supply," said Rebecca Stricker,

"We are working on the problem on the problem in the first round of testing, and will now take action on the second round,"

—Scott Linneberger
Vale Superintendent

nursing supervisor at the Waller County Health District. "Occasionally, we will hear from a pediatrician."

Stricker said a concerned parent can have the testing done on a child by a family physician or pediatrician. She urged parents seeing signs of possible high levels of lead in a child to consult a doctor.

744-7 School District Will Retest for Lead

by Linda Bergeron
of the Hells Canyon Journal

At the regular meeting of the Pine Eagle School District's board on November 14, the board had a full report from Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Thatcher regarding the test results for the possibility of lead in the water (as published in the November 16 issue of the *Hells Canyon Journal*). Of the 40 sites (from all three buildings) where test samples were taken, 21 of them tested negative, and 19 tested positive with trace amounts. He provided a chart of the specific sites, and assured the board that these were analyzed by a state-certified lab, and that the 19 sites would be retested "to ensure that the district's drinking water is safe."

He said that, if necessary, "We'll remediate, mitigate, and turn it off." The State of Oregon is reimbursing the district for those costs incurred only up to December 31.

Earlier in November, the City of Halfway's Public Works Director, Paige Frederickson, clarified that "lead and copper are not found naturally in water," and that the local water source, including wells, does not contain lead. She explained that plumbing in older buildings which used lead and copper solder were the source of contact for these elements showing up in water.

Present at the meeting were Superintendent Cammie deCastro, Business Manager Lisa Butler, Thatcher, Principal Morgan Gover, and staff members Kay Young, Deniz Kumar and Joe Denig.

Directors Mark Butler, Michelle Butner, John Minarich, Kim Rowen and (chair) Bob Seal were present. (Heather Farley and Dwight Saunders were absent.)

Guests included 12 FFA chapter students who recently attended their annual convention, Carmelita Holland, LeeAnn and Jack Jensen, Dan Koopman (BMCC), Khris Lorence and Ira Stutzman.

Lisa Butler reported, "We are in our audit process, and it is going well." (The com-

pleted audit report is scheduled for December.) She declared an unexpected expenditure resulting from a district employee in the 1990s who was qualified for PERS, but whose wages had not been reported as PERS wages.

"PERS sent us a bill for \$18,000," she said. "I pulled out the old files to check that it was legitimate, and it was true."

Senate Bill 98

Mrs. deCastro detailed some discussions at the OSBA conference earlier this month.

Senate Bill 98 passed, which addressed dropout prevention and chronic absenteeism.

"On the surface," she said, it looks like it would be beneficial, but actually aspects would be very difficult for very small schools like us. Dollars that are normally allocated for schools like us, that money can only be used for such programs. It kind of pigeon-holes us.

"You have to write a grant, and you only get up to that amount..."

She reported that a group that she's involved with is working on bringing together small schools to add some flexibility to that.

"Right now, the legislature can tweak the working of the bill. We have provided suggestions and input. We'd have to see how we would implement it in our schools."

She is expecting information in January on the status of the education act that followed the No Child Left Behind Act - that is, President Obama's Each Child Succeeds Act (ESSA).

"A new president can change that," she said.

Web Academy

Mrs. deCastro declared there have been a number of issues which have beset the online academy.

"The web program we have been using - they switched platforms in August, and weren't even sure how to administer that. It was a nightmare. Consequently, we have lost some kids on this, this week. We also lost some money that we were anticipating. We tried to get some
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Polk County Itemizer
Observer
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SCHOOL NOTES

Dallas lead results now online

DALLAS — Full results of Dallas School District's lead testing is available on the district website.

The district received the last of the results on Nov. 10 and posted them on Nov. 15.

Facilities Director Kevin Montague said the those faucets that tested at or higher than the EPA-recommended action level of 20 parts per billion have been shut off or had signs placed on them saying the fixtures are for hand washing only.

Most faucets were found to be under the recommended limit after the second tests. Those that were not will remain off, Montague said.

The district's Citizen's Oversight Committee is considering how the next steps for the fixtures that are over the limit.

For more information or to see the results: <http://www.dallas.k12.or.us/lead-information-in-dallas-school-d>

744-7