

# Sidwell Friends

## Lead in Drinking Water – Public and Nonpublic Schools

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE: ELEVATED WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)**

#### **Sidwell Friends**

#### **ELEVATED LEAD WATER SAMPLE RESULT(S)**

All Maryland public and nonpublic schools are required to sample all drinking water outlets for the presence of lead pursuant to the Code of Maryland Regulations. On 5/8/2018, 125 lead water samples were collected from Sidwell Friends. Of these lead water samples, 7 had levels of lead exceeding the action level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The elevated lead results from the sample(s) collected at Sidwell Friends Lower School were as follows:

- Manor House 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Janitor's Closet Sink (90.0 ppb)
- Manor House 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Math Room Drinking Fountain (26.0 ppb)
- Manor House Hose Bib outside main door to left of porch (57.5 ppb)
- Manor House Hose Bib outside main door to right of porch (36.7 ppb)
- SAM Bldg. Science Room Left Sink (285.0 ppb)
- SAM Bldg. Science Room Right Sink (69.6 ppb)
- Hose Bib outside Groome Bldg. near Room 108 (east side mulch bed) (1,720.0 ppb)

#### **ACTION LEVEL (AL)**

The AL is 20 ppb for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The AL is the concentration of lead which, if exceeded, triggers required remediation.

#### **HEALTH EFFECTS OF LEAD**

Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources. It can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Lead is stored in the bones and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the fetus receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults.

#### **SOURCES OF HUMAN EXPOSURE TO LEAD**

There are many different sources of human exposure to lead. These include: lead-based paint, lead-contaminated dust or soil, some plumbing materials, certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, food, and cosmetics, exposure in the work place and exposure from certain hobbies, brass faucets, fittings, and valves. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water, while for an infant consuming formula mixed with lead-containing water this may increase to 40 to 60 percent.

## **IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TAKEN**

Upon notification, the school immediately shut off the water at the seven locations; the water will remain off at these locations until completion of the associated next steps.

Additional “first draw” and “flush” samples were taken for these locations within 5 days

## **NEXT STEPS**

All 7 fixtures that had levels exceeding the action level will be replaced.  
The replacement water fountain will have a filter.

## **TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER:**

1. Run your water to flush out lead: If water hasn't been used for several hours, run water for 15 to 30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking.
2. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula: Lead from the plumbing dissolves more easily into hot water.

*Please note that boiling the water will not reduce lead levels.*

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

1. For additional information, please contact Russ Friedson, Assistant Head of School for Finance and Operations, at [friedsonr@sidwell.edu](mailto:friedsonr@sidwell.edu) or 202-537-8122.
2. For additional information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead).
3. If you are concerned about exposure; contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead.