

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

Helen A Fort Middle School found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in two areas of the school. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and children. Contact us at 609-893-8141 to obtain a translated copy of the public education materials request assistance in the appropriate language.

Helen A Fort Middle School found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in two areas in the building. This means that some water samples collected from customers' taps exceeded the lead action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) from 6/1/24 to 9/30/24 and this information is required to be sent because Helen A Fort Middle School has a lead action level exceedance. The action level is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. An action level exceedance is determined by measuring the highest concentration of lead in tap water that is exceeded by 10 percent of the sites sampled during a monitoring period (referred to as the "90<sup>th</sup> percentile"). If water from the tap does exceed the lead action level, then the water system must take certain steps to correct the problem.

Because lead may pose serious health risks, the EPA set a Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) of zero for lead. The MCLG is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Please read this information closely to see what you can do to reduce lead in your drinking water.

We collected drinking water samples for lead on 8/2/2024. Below please find a chart illustrating the sampling locations and their results.

Sample Location	Result in ppb
Kitchen sink by freezer	0.0159
Sink by room 70	0.0187

## 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. 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. Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life. During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development.



In other words, it is the fetus that is at risk because developing fetuses receive lead from the mother's bones. Children and fetuses absorb more lead into their bodies than adults and are more susceptible to its effects on brain development; however, most children with elevated blood lead levels do not exhibit any symptoms, but effects may appear later in life.

### **Sources of Lead**

Lead is a common metal found in the environment. Drinking water is one possible source of lead exposure. The main sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust or soil. In addition, lead can be found in certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, cosmetics, imported spices and other food. Other sources include exposure in the workplace and exposure from certain hobbies like shooting ranges and fishing (lead can be carried on clothing or shoes). Lead is found in some toys, some playground equipment, and some children's metal jewelry.

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipes, brass, and chrome-brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of or lined with lead.

When water remains in contact with lead pipes or plumbing materials containing lead over time, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon if the water has not been used all day, may contain elevated levels of lead.

- Homes and buildings in New Jersey built before 1987 are more likely to have lead pipes and/or lead solder.
- Service lines, which may also contain lead, are the individual pipes that run from the well to a home or building. The property owner is also the owner of the service line. Lead service lines are not typically found in non-community systems.
- Brass faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free", may also contribute lead to drinking water. The law currently allows end-use brass fixtures, such as faucets, that contain a maximum of 0.25 percent lead to be labeled as "lead free". However, prior to January 4, 2014, "lead free" allowed up to 8 percent lead content of the wetted surfaces of plumbing products including those labeled National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) certified. Consumers should be aware of their current fixtures and take appropriate precautions.

EPA estimates that 10 to 20 percent of a person's potential exposure to lead may come from drinking water. Infants who consume mostly formula mixed with lead-containing water may receive 40 to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water. When there are elevated levels of lead in your water, drinking water is likely to be a more important source of exposure.

### **Steps You Can Take to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water**

1. **Replace service lines containing lead.** Lead service lines in New Jersey are water supply connections made of, or lined with, a material consisting of lead, and which connects a water main to a building inlet. Lead pigtails, lead goosenecks, and other lead fittings are also considered to be lead service lines along with galvanized service lines.



2. Find out if you have interior lead plumbing or solder. If your home/building was constructed prior to 1987, it is important to determine if interior lead solder or lead pipes are present. You can check yourself, hire a licensed plumber.

3. Replace plumbing fixtures and service lines containing lead. Replace brass faucets, fittings, and valves that do not meet the current definition of "lead free." The current definition went into effect January 4, 2014; therefore, any "lead free" plumbing materials purchased and/or installed prior to that date should be discarded or replaced. Visit the NSF website at [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

4. Run the cold water to flush out lead. Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer the water resides in plumbing the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap means running the cold-water faucet for about 15 to 30 seconds. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of the plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your health. It usually uses less than one gallon of water. Let the water run from the tap longer based on the length of the lead service line and the plumbing configuration in your home or building. In other words, the larger the home or building and the greater the distance to the water main (in the street), the more water it will take to flush properly.

5. Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Because lead from lead-containing plumbing materials and pipes can dissolve into hot water more easily than cold water, never drink, cook, or prepare beverages including baby formula using hot water from the tap. It is recommended to use bottled or filtered water for drinking and preparing baby formula. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and then heat it.

6. Do not boil water to remove lead as it will not reduce lead levels.

7. Use alternative sources or treatment of water. If there is confirmed or suspected lead-containing materials, such as a lead service line and/or interior lead plumbing or lead solder, in your home or building, you may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter. Be sure the filter is approved to reduce lead or contact NSF International at 1-800-NSF-8010 or [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) for information on performance standards for water filters. Be sure to maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

8. Regularly remove and clean aerators/screens on plumbing fixtures. Over time, particles and sediment can collect in the aerator screen. Regularly remove and clean aerator screens located at the tip of faucets and remove any particles.

9. Test your water for lead. Call us at **609-893-8141** to find out how to get your water tested for lead. Testing is essential because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water. **The Lab that we are currently using is Garden State Labs, their phone number is 800-273-8901**

10. Get your child tested. Contact your local health department or healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead if you are concerned about lead exposure. Your



family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead. Wash your children's hands and toys often as they can come into contact with dirt and dust containing lead. New Jersey law requires that children be tested for lead in their blood at both 1 and 2 years of age (12 and 24 months), and before they are 6 years old if they have never been tested before or if they have been exposed to a known source of lead. You can find out more about how to get your child tested and how to pay for it at <https://www.state.nj.us/health/childhoodlead/testing.shtml>. Children 3 to 5 years of age should also be tested if they have not been tested before.

The steps described above will reduce the lead concentrations in your drinking water. However, if a water test indicates that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations more than 15 ppb after flushing, or after we have completed our actions to minimize lead levels, then we may take the following additional measures:

**12. Have an electrician check wiring.**

If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to pipes, corrosion may be greater. If this is the case, we would need to check with a licensed electrician or our local electrical code to determine if our wiring can be grounded elsewhere. DO NOT attempt to change the wiring yourself because improper grounding can cause electrical shock and fire hazards.

**13. Water softeners and reverse osmosis units** will remove lead from water but can also make the water more corrosive to lead solder and plumbing by removing certain minerals; therefore, the installation of these treatment units at the point of entry into homes and buildings with lead plumbing should only be done under supervision of a qualified water treatment professional.

**What Happened? What Is Being Done?**

The Pemberton School system is currently working with the NJDEP to help guide us in monitoring the water quality parameters of the school water system. The school will be conducting evaluations of the entire water system. Helen A Fort Middle Schools water system has been test for Lead and Copper every 3 years, since 2004. The water system has never received a notice of violation for any exceedance of any parameters.

Helen A Fort Middle School is **continuing** both monitoring efforts and public education about lead in drinking water.

**Additional Information**

For more information, call us at 609-893-8141.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home/building and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's website at, <http://www.epa.gov/lead> call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD or Safe Drinking Water Act hotline at 1-800-426-4791, or contact your health care provider.

This notice is being distributed to you by Helen A Fort Middle School , New Jersey Public Water System Identification Number (PWSID) NJ0329302

You can check your water system's chemical results and monitoring requirements (i.e., the frequency of sampling and number of samples) by searching the PWSID on New Jersey Drinking Water Watch at [www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/waterwatch](http://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/waterwatch).

*\*Please share this information with all the other people who consume water provided by Helen A Fort Middle School, especially those who may not have received this notice directly. \**

Date Notification was distributed 8/26/2024



PWSID:

NJ0329302

System Name:

Helen A Fort Middle School

**Section 3: NTNCWS, TNCWS, or NP Only – Distribution Requirements***Check all that apply and provide information as indicated below:*

Section 3.A: PE Distributed Within Required Timeframes		Indicate if Required Deadline Met
Distributed/issued all the federal PE requirements within 60 days after the end of the monitoring period in which the initial lead action level exceedance occurred. <i>If no, provide explanation:</i> _____		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Distributed written PE notice by regular mail to customers within 10 calendar days after the water system confirmed that there has been a lead ALE pursuant to NJ S968.		Date: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Section 3.B: PE Distribution Requirements	Date(s) Completed	Attached Proof of Completion
1 Posted informational posters in a public place or common area in each building of the water system.		<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Provided PE notice to each person served by the water system.	08/26/2024	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 Schools and childcares only: Provided PE notice to parents and guardians. <b>N/A</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Water system is not a school or childcare</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section 4: Certification**

I hereby certify for \_\_\_\_\_ water system the information provided above is true and accurate and the following is true:

- 1) A copy of all PE materials and lists of newspapers, radio, television, facilities, and other organizations they were provided to is attached to this certification form in accordance with 40 C.F.R. 141.90(f).
- 2) PE has been provided to consumers in accordance with all delivery, content, and format requirements specified in 40 C.F.R. 141.85 and NJ S968.

*Failure to comply with all PE content, delivery, and reporting requirements will result in a Safe Drinking Water Act violation of 40 C.F.R. 141.85 or 40 C.F.R. 141.90(f) and/or of NJ S968.*

*In accordance with 40 CFR 141.91, all public education records must be retained for no fewer than 12 years.*

System Owner/Director Print Name:	Scott Krisanda	System Owner/Director Signature:	
Phone Number:	609-893-8141	Date:	October 30, 2024
Licensed Operator of Record Print Name:	Charles Vester	Licensed Operator of Record Signature:	
Phone Number:	609-410-3397	Date:	

# DRINKING WATER NOTICE

## Monitoring Requirements Not Met for Helen A. Fort Middle School

We violated a drinking water requirement. Even though this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have the right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

*\*We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. During the period of 07/01/2023 to 09/30/2023 we did not monitor for Coliform and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of our drinking water during that time.*

### What This Means

There is nothing you need to do at this time. The table below lists the contaminant(s) we did not properly test for, how often we are supposed to sample (frequency) and how many samples we are supposed to take, how many samples we took, when samples should have been taken, and the date on which follow-up samples were (or will be) taken.

Contaminant	Required sampling frequency	Number of samples taken	When samples should have been taken	When samples were (or will be) taken
Coliform	One sample per Quarter	0	07/01/2023 to 09/30/2023	12/20/2023

### Steps We Are Taking

WE HAVE SINCE TAKEN THE REQUIRED SAMPLES AS DESCRIBED IN THE LAST TABLE ABOVE. THE SAMPLE SHOWED WE ARE MEETING DRINKING WATER STANDARDS.

For more information, please contact Scott Krisanda of Pemberton Schools at 609-893-8141.

*\*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly. You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*

This notice is being sent to you by Helen A Fort Middle School State Water System ID#: NJ0329302.

Date distributed: \_\_\_\_\_