

## SHAMONG TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

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August 21, 2017

Dear Shamong Township School District Community,

In the early Spring of 2016, several school districts and communities nationally reported concerns regarding the quality of their potable water. As always here in Shamong, we strive to be proactive regarding concerns of this nature. In May of 2016, Mr. Todd Hall, Supervisor of Operations employed the services of an Environmental Company to test our potable water in each of our schools. We received the results from the company in June 2016, indicating that all of the ten random samples at each location were below the required action limits at that time.

On July 13, 2016, The New Jersey State Board of Education (NJBOE) adopted new regulations regarding testing for lead in potable water in all public schools throughout New Jersey. As our school district is committed to protecting the health of our students, teachers, and staff, we employed a company to retest all of our facilities in relationship to the new established standards by the NJBOE.

The new NJBOE established regulations require extensive testing of all our water sources, including water fountains, sinks with attached fountain drinking bubblers, all general use faucets and utility sinks. Depending upon the results of the sampling, remedial measures may include, but are not limited to water flushing, fixture and/or valve replacement, pipe removal and/or general cleaning. We are directed as per the NJBOE regulations to implement immediate remedial measures for any potable water outlet with results greater than the action level of 15 ug/l [ppb] (parts per billion). These may include turning off an outlet, unless it is determined that the location must remain on for non-drinking purposes. In these cases, a sign posted "DO NOT DRINK – SAFE FOR HAND WASHING ONLY."

In accordance with the Department of Education regulations, Shamong Township School District will implement immediate remedial measures for any drinking water outlet with a result greater than the action level of 15 µg/l (parts per billion [ppb]). This includes turning off the outlet unless it is determined the location must remain on for non-drinking purposes. In these cases, a "DO NOT DRINK – SAFE FOR HANDWASHING ONLY" sign will be posted.

### Results of our Testing

Following instructions given in technical guidance developed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, we completed a plumbing profile for each of the buildings within Shamong Township School District. Through this effort, we identified and tested all drinking water and food preparation outlets. Of the 92 samples taken, all but 3 tested below the lead action level established by the US Environmental Protection Agency for lead in drinking water (15 µg/l [ppb]).

The table below identifies the drinking water outlets that tested above the 15 µg/l for lead, the actual lead level, and what temporary remedial action Shamong Township School District has taken to reduce the levels of lead at these locations.

<b>Sample Location</b>	<b>First Draw Result in µg/l (ppb)</b>	<b>Remedial Action</b>
IMS-SF-37, Room 37, Sink Faucet	26.6	Faucet taken out of service replace faucet, Retest
IMMS-SFS-K3T-L, Kitchen- 3 Tub (Left) Sink Faucet	21.2	Faucet taken out of service, replace faucet, Retest
IMMS-SF-203, Room 203, Sink Faucet	31.2	Faucet taken out of service, replace faucet, Retest

### Health Effects of Lead

High levels of lead in drinking water can cause health problems. Lead is most dangerous for pregnant women, infants, and children under 6 years of age. 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. Exposure to high levels of lead during pregnancy contributes to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. In young children, lead exposure can lower IQ levels, affect hearing, reduce attention span, and hurt school performance. At *very* high levels, lead can even cause brain damage. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults.

### How Lead Enters our Water

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like groundwater, 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 in building plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass, and chrome-plated brass faucets. In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials. However, even the lead in plumbing materials meeting these new requirements is subject to corrosion. When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the

lead may dissolve into the drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning *may* contain fairly high levels of lead.

#### Lead in Drinking Water

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of children under the age of 6. EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20% or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

#### For More Information

A copy of the test results is available in our central office for inspection by the public, including students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents, and can be viewed between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and are also available on our website at [shamongschools.org](http://shamongschools.org). For more information about water quality in our schools, contact Todd Hall at the Shamong Township School District Facility and Maintenance Department, 609-268-0316.

For more information on reducing lead exposure around your home and the health effects of lead, visit EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead), call the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD, or contact your health care provider.

If you are concerned about lead exposure at this facility or in your home, you may want to ask your health care providers about testing children to determine levels of lead in their blood.

The Shamong Township Public School believes in being proactive and takes the safety of students and staff very seriously. We are grateful that our sampling program indicated very minor issues as compared to many other districts across the state where much larger problems are being identified. With consistent flushing, proper maintenance, and removal of a few older fixtures, we anticipate passing all future testing events. As always, if you should have any questions/concerns or need additional information do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Vespe".

Dr. Christine Vespe  
Superintendent of Schools