



Education
PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

September 7, 2018

Re: Water testing at Wood Street Centre

The Government of Yukon tested the water from drinking fountains and water fixtures at some Yukon schools for lead levels in summer 2018, including Wood Street Centre.

Results summary:

One drinking fountain, two classrooms and three bathroom water fixtures did have lead levels above the national standards and we will be replacing the affected fixtures. The fixtures are safe for washing but shouldn't be used for drinking.

Mitigation work:

The test results indicate the water fixtures need upgrading. They will be replaced and retested to check the new fixtures. We do not anticipate any impact on school programming. Specific work includes:

1. One drinking water fountain will be shut off and taken out of order and replaced. School staff will be instructing students to get their drinking water from the other fountains until this time.
2. The water fixtures in classrooms and bathrooms will have signs placed at them and school staff will instruct students to use these sinks for washing only until the fixtures are replaced.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health advises that there is no short term risk to health associated with water fixtures with levels above the national standards. National standards are based on exposure to lead over a lifetime, and children drink water from multiple sources. Occasional consumption of water from these fixtures will not be enough to significantly affect the health of students or staff. However, the Government of Yukon is taking steps to ensure the long term health of students and staff by reducing the amount of lead they are exposed to in schools.

More information:

Lead is a heavy metal that occurs naturally in low levels in the environment. Everyone is exposed to trace amounts of lead through air, soil, household dust, food, drinking water and various consumer products. Lead was

commonly used in plumbing materials (including drinking fountains and sink taps) before 1988 when national building standards changed to reduce the use of lead. As a result, schools built before 1990 may have water fixtures and plumbing materials that contain lead. Lead from the fixtures and plumbing materials can leech into the water when it sits in the water system for longer periods.

Last school year, the Government of Yukon sampled and tested water at Del Van Gorder School in Faro after maintenance work. Test results identified some elevated levels of lead at some water fixtures. Mitigation work took place and the issue was resolved. Following Del Van Gorder, and at the advice of Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Yukon government developed a protocol to test all water fixtures at all schools built before 1990 in summer 2018.

More information is available on the Department of Education's website at education.gov.yk.ca/water-testing.html.

If you have any further questions, please contact the school.