



201 Main Street  
Vestal, NY 13850

From the Office of the Superintendent



## Updated Information on Water Testing in Vestal

September 2023

### Dear Vestal High School Community,

The Vestal Central School District's highest priority is always the health and well-being of our students, staff and the community members who also utilize our facilities.

We wanted to apprise you of legislation, originally signed by New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, which mandates that all schools in the state test drinking water for lead contamination.

### *What Does This Mean for School Districts?*

Pursuant to Public Health Law (Section 1110), which governs school potable water testing and standards, effective January 1, 2023, schools must conduct first-draw tap water testing at all applicable outlets.

One of the key revisions to Subpart 67-4 of the law is the revised action level of lead in drinking water has been reduced from 15 ppb (ppb) to 5 parts per billion.

Test results must then be reported to parents, the state Department of Health and local government officials. As part of our commitment to providing a safe, secure environment for our students, we have complied with these newly released regulations.

### *Testing Requirements*

All outlets currently or potentially used for drinking or cooking must be tested with a first-draw sample January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025. The water tests are required to be repeated at least every three years, or at an earlier time as determined by the commissioner.

### *District Water Sources*

In the Vestal Central School District, the water source at African Road, Clayton Avenue, Glenwood and Vestal Hills Elementary Schools, Vestal Middle School and Vestal High School is the Town of Vestal Municipal Water. Tioga Hills Elementary School receives water from the Town of Owego. Previously, schools in New York were not required to test their drinking water for lead. However, in March 2016 we voluntarily conducted

random-sample testing throughout the school district. This legislation requires all school districts in the state to test potable water for lead contamination and to develop and implement a lead remediation plan where necessary.

### **Results**

New York State has set safe levels at 5 parts per billion. The EPA's (Environmental Protection Agency) safe-level requirement is 15 parts per billion. At Vestal High School, 294 water outlets were tested, including those that are not used for drinking water. A total of 55 outlets showed an excess lead level at or above 5 ppb. Of those, 51 findings were from non-drinking locations, such as hose bibs, bathroom sinks, custodial wash, and science lab or darkroom sinks. The other four (4) sources were from kitchen wash sinks, which could potentially be used in food preparation and in nurse's office sinks.

### **Remediation**

Regardless of the source of the elevated lead levels, please be assured that any affected fixtures have been shut off and/or marked by signage to prevent use until all necessary repairs are made. We anticipate that outlets currently or potentially used for drinking or cooking will be remediated by October 1, 2023. The non-drinking fixtures will be taken out of service or marked by signage. Further testing will then take place to ensure that lead levels are within the normal range before the fixture or outlet is returned to use. We continue to work closely with our Broome-Tioga BOCES Safety Specialist and the Broome County Health Department to ensure that the water in all of our buildings is safe.

### **Questions?**

A copy of the district's test results for each building will be available by visiting the Water-Quality Testing page of our website, [www.vestal.stier.org/WaterQualityTestinginVestalSchools.aspx](http://www.vestal.stier.org/WaterQualityTestinginVestalSchools.aspx). You will also find the district's Lead Remediation Plan there.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 607-757-2231. Additional information is available at [Lead Testing of School Drinking Water \(ny.gov\)](http://LeadTestingofSchoolDrinkingWater.ny.gov)

Sincerely,



Jeffrey J. Ahearn  
Superintendent of Schools