

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:**  
**ELEVATED LEAD LEVELS IN WATER TEST SAMPLE**  
**St. Michaels Elementary School (SMES) &**  
**St. Michaels Middle/High School (SMMHS)**

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff:

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 November 8, 2019, St. Michaels Elementary School & Middle/High School had 56 water samples collected to test for lead. Of the 56 water samples, 1 fixture had levels of lead exceeding the Action Level (AL) of 20 parts per billion (ppb). The elevated lead result from the sample collected at the St. Michaels campus is as follows:

**Kitchen Kettle – 25.3 parts per billion (ppb)**

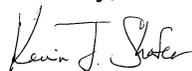
The initial testing results registered 25.3 ppb at a kitchen appliance called the Kitchen Kettle. The AL is 20 ppb for lead in drinking water in school buildings. The AL is the concentration of lead which, if exceeded, triggers required remediation.

The Kitchen Kettle is an appliance located in our kitchen and is required to be tested, however, the food preparation process does not utilize this appliance. Additionally, this appliance is not used as a drinking outlet. The initial testing conducted is referred to as a “first draw” or stagnated sample, which is required to be taken without allowing the water to run. This “first draw” sampling was conducted for all applicable water outlets on the St. Michaels campus. The only outlet that failed, which is the kitchen kettle, was then retested using a “flushed sample”. The “flushed sample” requires that the water sample be taken after running the water briefly (15-30 seconds). The “flushed sample” result was 0 parts per billion (ppb).

In summary, it appears that the Kitchen Kettle appliance, due to not being used, caused a buildup of lead levels at that fixture. Due to the lead test failure at that fixture and the fact that the appliance is not used, Talbot County Public Schools has disconnected the water to this appliance, as an accepted remediation plan through the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).

Included with this correspondence is additional information from MDE pertaining to lead exposure and the associated health effects. For additional information specific to the St. Michaels Campus lead testing, please contact me at the contact information provided above. 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). If you are concerned about exposure; contact the local health department or your healthcare provider to find out how you can have your child tested for lead.

Sincerely,



Kevin Shafer

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO LEAD EXPOSURE**

### **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.

### **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:**

Visit EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead). 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.