



Drinking Water at KPR Schools: Lead Testing

November 2019

Does KPR test its drinking water?

Yes. KPR is committed to ensuring the water in our schools is safe for students and staff. All schools have met the requirements of provincial lead testing and water flushing legislation for over 10 years. In July 2017, stricter provincial regulations came into effect, requiring elementary schools and child care facilities to test all faucets used for drinking water or food preparation over a three-year period. While the province now requires all secondary school consumable taps to be tested over a five-year period, KPR went above and beyond by applying the three-year timeline to secondary schools as well.

Schools on wells also must comply with an additional regulation that governs routine testing for a wider, more comprehensive list of substances. We have met all the requirements of that legislation as well.

Who tests our water?

Since 2010, we have used a third-party expert, Cambium Consulting and Engineering, to conduct all of our water testing and advise us on water management.

Are the testing results public?

Yes. We have been publicly posting water testing results for each of our schools on our website - www.kprschools.ca - for about a dozen years. The reports are accessible from a home page link titled [Energy/Water Reports](#). Two types of water reports are posted. [Water Reports - Lead \(all schools\)](#) include lead testing results for all KPR schools. [Water Reports - Well Water Tests](#) include results for a longer list of substances at schools on wells.

When is the testing done?

We do our lead testing between May 1-October 31, as required by the lead regulation, with the majority of the testing completed during July and August.

What is the maximum amount of lead allowed?

Schools are under provincial jurisdiction and must meet the requirements of provincial legislation, which sets 10 parts per million as the maximum acceptable threshold for lead. Federal Health Canada guidelines do not apply to schools. That said, the provincial government has stated it is reviewing the federal maximum guideline of 5 parts per million and will make a recommendation, after consulting with stakeholders, about the provincial standard. We look forward to hearing the results of the provincial consultation and will, of course, continue to ensure we meet all provincial requirements.

How is the testing done?

Two samples are taken during the test: a “standing” sample of water that has been sitting in the pipes for at least six hours, and a “flushed” sample after the tap has been allowed to run for a short period. Provincial directives state the flushed sample is the best indicator of safety;

however, if either sample has lead levels above the provincial standard, we notify our local public health agencies and take corrective action.

What happens if a school “fails” its lead test result?

If either the standing water sample or flushed sample has lead levels above the legal standard of 10 micrograms per litre, we notify our local Health Unit regarding next steps. More specifically, if the results are still too high after flushing, we “bag” the tap or otherwise remove it from service. We then have the tap retested. Once it receives a passing grade after flushing, the faucet will still be placed on an increased flushing schedule (daily flushing) for two years. Even if only one tap in a school failed the flushed test while the other taps passed, the entire school is put on a daily flushing schedule for at least two years, as a precaution. If the tap fails the flushed test a second time, we pull it from service until it can be corrected. The corrective action can include permanent removal of the tap from service; replacement of the plumbing; or replacement of the faucet. We then test again to ensure the faucet is safe for drinking.

Are students exposed to higher levels while we wait for test results?

No. Lead testing is done over the summer, when students are not in school. This allows us to receive the results, and ensure corrective action is taken, before students return to school in September.

How do we ensure our water stays safe for students and staff?

Our custodians are on site at schools long before students arrive, many by 6:30 a.m. They flush the water sources as required, with daily flushing done at the schools that were put on an increased flushing schedule. All schools, regardless of test results, are flushed by custodians at least once a week, on Mondays or the Tuesday after a long weekend, as a matter of course.

Where can I find more information on lead testing requirements for Ontario schools?

The provincial government website has more detailed information at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/flushing-and-sampling-lead>