



## Keeping Our Children Safe: Safe drinking water for all students.

We all have one thing in common, the safety of our children. The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board implements flushing and testing programs that comply with or exceed the Ministry of Education Guideline on Lead in Water that enforces the highest standards.

### Common questions and answers.

#### **Does Ontario have a drinking-water quality standard for lead?**

“Yes. The Ontario drinking water quality standard for lead is 10 micrograms per litre, which is based on a national guideline. The drinking water regulatory limit is based on a prudent (more protective) estimate that takes children’s health into consideration.”<sup>1</sup>

#### **What are the schools doing to comply with government regulations?**

All schools have been tested for lead and will continue to be tested annually. “If a school’s drinking water test shows that there is more than 10 micrograms per litre of lead, the local Medical Officer of Health works with the schools to find ways to reduce lead levels in the water, and monitors the safety of the water. These local processes are already in place and are working well. The government has also provided funding for schools to install special lead filters on taps, and to provide alternate drinking water sources, such as bottled water and coolers.”<sup>2</sup>

#### **Are all school water sources tested?**

Yes, all school water sources are tested; however, please note that students and staff are asked to drink out of regular drinking water sources only. It is not advisable to drink from classroom sinks, custodial sinks, washroom sinks or other locations which are not commonly used for drinking or food preparations. This safe practice corresponds with safe food handling techniques recommended by our local health units.

#### **What happens if a school’s drinking water test result is above or even slightly above 10 micrograms?**

If a school or site’s test results do not meet or exceed the minimum standard, that location temporarily uses bottled drinking water rather than the regular drinking water source. The issue is corrected in compliance with Regulation 243/07 and all amendments.

#### **How can I find out results for my child’s school?**

To view the results from all the schools and sites of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board visit [www.bhncdsb.ca](http://www.bhncdsb.ca) and select the [Individual Site Test Results hyperlink](#) on the *Keeping Our Children Safe: Safe drinking water for all students* fact sheet.

#### **The test results indicate that the standing water lead content is above 10 micrograms, but the flushed water test was below. What does this mean? Is the water safe to drink?**

A standing water test is performed before the building opens and before any water is used. If this test result is above 10 micrograms, that does not mean that the school’s water is unsafe. Standing water test results can be higher for many reasons. One example is if the water sample was taken from a location close to the facility’s service connection the test result could be higher. This is why a flushed water test is performed. The flushed water test results are accurate indicators of the quality of the water our children drink. All schools flush their water systems in accordance with the regulation. Maintaining these high standards ensures that the water is safe to drink.

#### **What if I have more questions?**

If you have any concerns or would like more information please feel free to contact your school, the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board or visit the Ministry of Environment’s website at [www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater](http://www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater).

References: [www.ene.gov.on.ca](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca)<sup>1,2</sup>, O. Reg. 243/07, Amendment Reg. Number 010-0743