Data from several districts, including the LOSD, are not yet included.

By JILLIAN DALEY
The Review

State health and education officials have launched a new database that includes the results of water tests for lead in Oregon schools and an interactive map with results for individual school buildings.

The map, which was unveiled last week, is designed to serve as a one-time resource because schools will now transition from providing test results on their own websites to submitting official Healthy and Safe Schools Facility plans to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE).

The map, which will remain online until the end of this school year, is not yet complete. Results from schools in several districts, including Newberg, Tigard-Tualatin, Riverdale and others, are not included.

Also missing: the Lake Oswego School District. Stuart Kettler, the LOSD executive director of finance, told The Review this week that additional testing is currently underway and that LOSD officials are evaluating whether they want previous results— which have already been shared with the community— and are currently posted on the district's website— included on the state map.

The LOSD collected samples of water at all its buildings in May and performed follow-up lead testing at Lake Oswego Junior High before classes began this summer. The results showed that in water fountains do not have unsafe levels of lead in any of the district's schools.

All 197 school districts in the state were asked to formulate a Healthy and Safe School Facilities plan by Jan. 1 after revelations earlier this year of high lead levels in the drinking water at Portland Public Schools.

In April, Gov. Kate Brown directed the Oregon Health Authority and the ODE to assess current programs and craft a plan to address the problem, according to the OHA website.

The state agency immediately required school districts and child care facilities to test for lead in all buildings; in the LOSD, that effort is ongoing as the district moves toward submitting its official plan with the state.

"Additional testing for all fixtures at all other schools that could reasonably be used for food prep or drinking water had samples pulled and submitted to the testing lab last month, but test results are not expected until January as the lab has a significant backlog," Kettler said. "As we did this past summer, any fixtures with test results that exceed EPA thresholds will be turned off and replaced if necessary and the new fixture retented before being made available.

A draft plan for the LOSD has already been created and is being reviewed. It will be finalised by Jan. 1 and its completion is not contingent upon the test results, Kettler said.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency recommends outlets be turned off at service of 2 or higher. After the May sample test results were released in June, two fixtures in the two LOSD buildings tested positive for lead levels that the EPA classifies as above the maximum contamination limit, according to a district-distributed comment report.

Neither of the fixtures—a drinking fountain in the Technology Building on the Lake Oswego High School campus and a handwashing sink in the Lake Oswego Junior High School kitchen— were regularly used by children, a district report said.

The Technology Building fountain, which was "rarely used" and is located in a staff development room, tested at 25 parts per billion for lead, the report said. The sink in the LOJ kitchen tested at 34 parts per billion. Both sinks were shut off.

Subsequent tests at LOJ, with results released in September, indicated water was safe for students and staff.

Reach Jillian Daley at 503-660-2388 or j.daley@express-news.com
OHA provides access to school water testing results

VERA WESTBROOK

State health and education officials have launched a database for accessing water test results for lead in Oregon schools. The tool provides an interactive map of Oregon and displays results for school buildings across the state. The mapping tool acts as a one-time source for sharing information on schools transitioning from providing test results on their websites to submitting Healthy and Safe School Facilities plans to the Oregon Department of Education in 2017. State officials acknowledge that lead testing data is technical and can be difficult to understand, so they are providing a FAQ to help translate and deciper testing results and a video tutorial for how to use the map. The information is scheduled to remain online until the end of the session and is not intended to replace communication with schools. While state agencies do not have statutory authority to mandate testing for lead in school drinking water, it has been strongly recommended that all schools test their facilities. The state’s Early Learning Council has convened a working group to examine strategies for reducing lead exposure in child care facilities and is scheduled to provide a recommendation regarding testing next month. For more information see the Drinking Water Test Results for Oregon Schools interactive map at geo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=64e626060b4bd744c0d0xf7f80552f572. For the Map FAQ see public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/HealthyNeighborhoods/HealthySchoolFacilities/Documents/understanding-school-drinking-water-data.pdf. To see the video tutorial for the map see www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKtm_kyVpe. The public can also access the OHA-hosted Healthy School Facilities web page at public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/HealthyNeighborhoods/HealthySchoolFacilities/index.aspx to learn more about healthy learning environments and lead testing in Oregon. For public health information call 971-239-6483 and for education-related questions call 503-947-5690.

By PARIS ACHEN

Schools reimbursed for water lead testing

SALEM — The Oregon Emergency Board on Wednesday approved reimbursing schools more than $2 million for about 53,000 tests for lead in school water supplies. The board established a $5 million reserve fund in September and authorized the Oregon Department of Education to accept applications from schools for reimbursement of costs associated with testing for elevated lead levels in drinking water. The 53,000 tests come from school districts that represent 89 percent of public school students in the state, according to the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Office.

School districts had until Dec. 1 to submit invoices for reimbursement. They could make requests for tests conducted between March and Dec. 1. The money only covers the cost of collecting and testing water supplies. It doesn’t account for any expenses associated with relocation of lead contamination.

The widespread testing followed widespread media coverage of a scandal in Portland Public Schools over lead in drinking water that went unreported. In August, the state Board of Education — at the behest of Gov. Kate Brown — approved a rule that requires school districts to submit a plan for testing for lead in water and other toxins in school environments and to report any results to the public. The rule doesn’t require actual testing.

Education and health authorities unveiled a database in 2017 that would require districts to test for lead in water.

New York recently enacted a law requiring schools to test for lead, report results to the public and develop a plan for reducing exposure to the toxin.
Long-term water solutions sought

BY CALLEY HAIR
The Oregonian

EDDYVILLE — Eddyville Charter School detected traces of lead and copper in its water during a random sampling, a discovery the school addressed by swapping out one sink fixture and shutting another faucet off altogether.

The problem has been noted in the short term, although Principal and Superintendent Jennifer Johnson said the school is looking to update its plumbing to eliminate further occurs as much as possible,” said Johnson in a Dec. 18 email to the News-Times.

In a Nov. 1 release, the school informed parents that a random testing of 10 faucets on Oct. 26 had turned up too many samples above the federal limit for lead, and one over the limit for copper.

One faucet, located in room 47, returned a lead concentration more than 10 times the federal limit with 0.164 milligrams per liter of water. Another faucet, located in the kitchen, returned a baseline result of 0.0176 mg/L.

The Environmental Protection Agency sets the action limit for lead at 0.015 mg/L, while the Oregon Health Authority sets a lower federal limit of 0.05 mg/L.

The sample drawn from room 47 also turned up results just over the actionable limit for copper. The water’s concentration was 1.3 mg/L, barely above the EPA cap of 1.5 mg/L.

In the release, Johnson outlined the steps the school took to address the issue.

“We cut access to the water fountain and the sink in room 47, and are only using the water in the kitchen for non-potable uses,” Johnson wrote.

“The kitchen sink is using bottled water for cooking. We brought in bottled water for the students in room 47. Since then, Johnson said the school replaced the fixture in the kitchen sink. A second round of testing came back with clean results. The faucet in room 47 remained off.

Nailed off the grid 20 miles east of Newport, Eddyville Charter School’s rural location requires that the school draw its water from a well. Individual well owners are required to ensure their quality of their own water, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The October tests aren’t the first time the school has faced water quality issues — testing in 2013 and 2014 found high lead levels, spurring the school to contract with Calligan Water Systems to install a treatment system designed to pull lead from the water.

The school also had to replace about $20,000 worth of pipes, according to a May 2018 report in the News-Times. “Eddyville Charter School is in a well,” said Johnson in the release.

“We’re looking for long-term solutions for this situation. We want you to know that we put our student’s health and safety first and foremost,”

Contact reporter Calley Hair at 541-650-8571 ext. 211 or chait@newportnews- times.com

Portland, OR
[Maplewood Co.]
Willamette Week
[May, 16, 2016]

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SCHOOLING

- Oregon day care centers that are required to do the same.

$11,118 Average annual cost of day care per child in Oregon.

$8,004 Annual tuition at Portland State University.

$401,700 Annual salary of PSU President Win Wieseler, who announced his 2017 retirement in July.

$401,700 Value of Wieseler’s one-year sabbatical after he retires.

9 Genders that students enrolling at PSU can select from, as of this year.

- Percentage of Oregon schools that have voluntarily reported to the state having tested their drinking water for lead.