Tests reveal lead in GBHS water fountains

By Jaya Z Harnabhtsman

Three water fountains at Gold Beach High School were shut down this week after testing of water sources at Central Curry School District campuses showed they contained higher than acceptable levels of lead.

These fountains will be repaired and retested by Christmas, said Superintendent Roy Durfee. "Three tested high, so we're taking steps to make the necessary repairs," he said. "This was only at Gold Beach High School - everything at Riley Creek was fine."

The state-mandated minimum threshold for lead contamination is 50 parts per billion. The fountains tested at 30, 60.4 and 134 parts per billion.

Durfee said the repairs will cost around $1,000, which will come out of the school's general fund.

Two sinks at Brookings Harbor School District were shut down for high lead levels this summer after conducting tests. The tests in Gold Beach and Brookings came after some schools in the state found significant levels of lead in their water, and testing became mandatory in August 2015, when the state implemented the Healthy and Safe Schools Plan.

Every school district must develop a plan to test for lead in drinking water and, if it's found, a plan to reduce the levels. All results must be released to the public.

After 2nd test, lead still an issue at Amity Creek

The district continues with plans to replace drinking fountains and a classroom sink at Amity Creek Elementary School.

Lead Levels in Pine Eagle School District Meet Federal Guidelines

The district announced the results of recent tests for elevated levels in the Pine Eagle Charter School's drinking water at its regularly scheduled board meeting on Monday, November 14, 2016.

According to the District's announcement, the testing was conducted in all three school buildings on October 6 by school personnel following federal and state guidelines. Samples were sent to a state-certified laboratory for analysis. The results were received by the School District and released within five business days.

Forty sites were sampled throughout the District. Twenty-one sites tested negative for any lead and nineteen tested positive for trace amounts below the acceptable levels set by federal guidelines. Pine Eagle has elected to revisit all nineteen sites to ensure the District's drinking water is safe. Any elevated lead levels above the federal guidelines will be addressed immediately by the School District.

Pine Eagle's lead testing program was instituted to ensure that drinking water in the school system is safe for children, staff and patrons of the District. Water with high lead levels can contribute to negative health effects, especially in young children.

Information about the lead testing program, including the laboratory results, is available at the district office located at 110 W. Bell St. in Halfway, Oregon. The district office is open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The laboratory results are also available on the District website at www.pineagle.org.

Lead

Leads to the water system are made from lead-coated brass, which can cause lead contamination in the water. The District will flush the system and test for lead at a third time. If these tests show that elevated levels are gone, the district will turn on water again at the school.

At Amity Creek, the district has supplied bottled water for drinking at Amity Creek Facebook. The Facebook page also announced that lead testing had been conducted but did not disclose the results.

The district said it will continue to monitor lead levels in drinking water and will provide updates as needed.

bathrooms is new. The district estimates replacement of hardware will cost about $350 per drinking fountain or sink, of which there are eight total. The district has received results only for its four buildings built before 1999. Results for facilities built after 1999 typically become available in a couple of weeks.
Lead testing reveals problem fixtures

WSD has fixed drinking water fixtures, officials say

By Julia Conner
The Independent

Nearly one in 12 water fixtures at Woodburn School District buildings had concentrations of lead higher than the federal limit of 20 parts per billion, test results released in September show. It was the first time the district had ever performed lead testing on the school’s water fixtures.

The testing was conducted over the summer, following guidelines released by the Oregon Health Authority as part of a statewide plan to test lead poisoning in schools. Fixtures whose water samples had lead concentrations higher than 20 parts per billion were immediately repaired or shut off, the district said.

"There are only a few fixtures left in the district where we have not yet tested the source of the lead," said Frank Leach, maintenance supervisor for the district. "Next week, we plan to test those fixtures to ensure all are safely designated for drinking." The last round of testing was performed in the district’s website. Letters were sent to parents addressing the results for individual schools.

"In the first round of testing, we focused on drinking water fixtures and found seven that required fixing," Superintendent Chuck Ranson wrote in a post on the district’s website. "These fixtures were determined to have lead levels above the federal limit of 20 parts per billion." Ranson said that while the results from the first round testing was "encouraging," the district still needs to test additional fixtures to ensure all are safe for drinking.

"These fixtures were designed to be lead-free, but it is important to ensure they are not being used improperly or causing any health risks," Ranson said.

French Prairie Middle School, where 0.1 percent of fixtures produced water with lead concentrations above 20 parts per billion, had the highest level of lead detected in the district. French Prairie Middle School was built in 1983 and Lincoln was built in 1992.

Leach said that the reason for the high levels of lead in the French Prairie Middle School was due to "the age of the building and the type of fixtures in use." He added that the district was working to replace the fixtures to ensure the water is safe for drinking.

The Oregon Board of Education has also set new standards for the district, including testing for lead in all schools and ensuring that the district’s water supply system is free of lead. The district has set a goal of testing all water fixtures in all schools within the next year.

"We are working to ensure that all fixtures are lead-free, and we are taking steps to minimize any potential exposure to lead," Ranson said.

"We know that lead can be harmful and we are committed to ensuring that our schools are safe for our students and staff," Leach said.

NM water now safe, district says

"We are committed to making sure our water is safe for our students and staff," Ranson said. "We are taking steps to ensure that our water is free of lead and that all fixtures are properly tested and fixed.

"We will continue to test our water outlets and report the results to the public," Ranson said.

"We are making progress, but we still have work to do," Leach said.

The district has also set up a hotline for parents to report concerns about lead in their schools.

"If you have concerns about lead in your school, please call our hotline," Ranson said. "We are committed to ensuring that our schools are safe for our students and staff.

The district has also set up a website to provide information about lead in schools and the steps being taken to address the issue.

"We are committed to making sure our schools are safe for our students and staff," Ranson said.
School District Will Retest for Lead

by Linda Bergeron
of the Hills Canyon Journal

At the regular meeting of the Pine Eagle School District's board on November 14, the board had a full report from Maintenance Supervisor Shavae Thatcher regarding the test results for the possibility of lead in the water (as published in the November 16 issue of the Hills Canyon Journal). Of the 40 sites (from all three buildings) where test samples were taken, 24 of them tested negative, and 19 tested positive with trace amounts. He provided a chart of the specific sites, and assured the board that these were analyzed by a state-certified lab, and that the sites would be retested to ensure that the district's drinking water is safe.

He said that, if necessary, "We'll remEDIATE, mitigate, and turn it off," the State of Oregon is reimbursing the district for those costs incurred only up to December 31.

Earlier in November, the City of Halfway's Public Works Director, Peige Frederickson, clarified that "lead and copper are not found naturally in water," and that the local water source, including wells, does not contain lead. She explained that plumbing in older buildings which used lead and copper solder were the source of contact for these elements showing up in water.

Present at the meeting were Superintendent Connie deCastro, Business Manager Lisa Butler, Thatcher, Principal Morgan Gove, and staff members Key Young, Densil Kumar and Joe Deeming.

Directors Mark Butler, Michelle Butler, John Minarich, Kim Rowen and chair Bob Bed were present. (Heather Parley and Dwight Saunders were absent.)

Guests included 12 FFA chapter students who recently attended their annual convention, Carmelita Holland, Lee Ann and Jack Jensen, Dan Reepman (BMCC), Chris Lorenzo and Joe Rettigman.

Lisa Butler reported, "We are in our audit process and it is going well." (The completed audit report is scheduled for December.) She declared an unexpected expenditure resulting from a district employee in the 1980s who was qualified for PERS, but whose wages had not been reported as PERS wages.

"PERS sent us a bill for $1,000," she said, "It pulled out the old files to check that it was legitimate, and it was true."

Senate Bill 98

Mrs. deCastro detailed some discussions at the OSBA conference earlier this month. Senate Bill 98 passed, which addressed dropout prevention and chronic absenteeism.

"On the surface," she said, "it looks like it would be beneficial, but actual aspects would be very difficult for very small schools like us. Dollars by the numbers are normally allocated for schools like us, that money can only be used for such programs. It kind of pigeon-holes us. "You have to write a grant, and you only get up to that amount..."

She reported that a group that she's involved with is working on bringing together small schools to add some flexibility to that.

"Right now, the legislature can tweak the working of the Act. We have provided suggestions and input. We'd like to see how we would implement it in our schools." She is expecting information in January on the status of the legislation that followed the No Child Left Behind Act— that is, President Obama's Each Child Succeeds Act (ECSA).

"A new president can change that," she said.

Web Academy

Mrs. deCastro declared there have been a number of issues which have been the online academy.

"The web program has been using the student platforms in August; and we've even seen how to administer the. It was a nightmare. Consequently, we have lost some kids on this, this week. We also lost some money that we were anticipating. We tried to get someContinued on page 6.