

## Excess lead in water at schools

### Lead

#### Tests reveal problem in West Irondequoit

TODD CLAUSEN

@TODDJCLAUSEN

West Irondequoit schools have found elevated levels of lead — sometimes at levels greater than five times federal recommendations — in the water at some of its schools.

Of the 622 samples collected at 13 buildings, 87 outlets were identified as having more than 15 parts per billion lead, the safety threshold established by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Nearly 14 percent of all the faucets tested exceeded the threshold, accord-

See **LEAD**, Page **8A**

---

Continued from Page 3A

ing to a letter to the school district by Mary Ellen Holvey, a senior industrial hygienist with ME Holvey Consulting that collected samples in October and conducted the tests.

“Priority for remedial measure should be conducted,” Holvey told the district in the report. “The identified outlets should be taken out of service until remedial measures have been implemented. If the outlets will continue to operate for hand washing or dishwashing purposes, they need to be adequately and securely placarded. Again, this is a temporary measure.”

West Irondequoit, along with several other districts throughout the area, began testing water after evaluated amounts of lead were found in the water in Flint, Michigan, and then at several upstate New York schools.

Brighton, Penfield, Pittsford, East Irondequoit and several other districts in the area have tested of their water and have announced corrective measures.

Schools were not previously required to test regularly for lead, but a new law approved last year by the state Legislature required such tests. Samples now need to be collected every five years. In Irondequoit, the highest number of samples above the federal guidelines were at the high school. Fifty-three of the 191 samples came in over 15 parts per billion, according to the report. Sinks in 11 areas tested at 40 ppb or higher. A sink in a girl's team locker room tested at 52.5. Another in room 2010 tested at 67.9. Elsewhere in the district, 12 samples fell above the threshold at Iroquois Middle School, eight at Dake Junior High, six at Lakeview School and one sample at both Brookview and Oakview schools.

The highest reading was 87.6 parts per billion in a fountain in Room 324 at Iroquois. A sink in Room 144 at Brookview had an 82.7 reading, according to the report. Forty-five of the faucets testing for evaluated levels of lead were laboratory faucets in science rooms. Holvey said the district should develop a procedure to document how faucets in those science rooms should be used. "The prohibition of using the sinks for drinking purposes as placarding alone is not considered a permanent remedial measure," she wrote. "The concern is if the classroom is used in the evenings or weekends for continuing education, etc., and the room is no longer in control of the teacher, there is a potential for use of the sinks for drinking purpose (however unlikely)." West Irondequoit said in a note posted to its website that those faucets in questions have been labeled unsafe for drinking. It added that the water is safe for hand- and dishwashing.

The district also said water faucets will be retested, replaced or shut off.

*TCLAUSEN@Gannett*

*.com*