

From: [Cohn, Gary](#)
To: [EPS.Maillist](#)
Subject: Water Quality Testing in Our District
Date: Wednesday, May 11, 2016 10:33:12 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Dear Colleague:

If you've been attending to news about schools as have I, it's very likely that you've read or watched several news stories about lead in the drinking water in several districts' schools in Washington. News of the Flint, Michigan and then Tacoma water quality questions have naturally caused people to turn their attention to local water sources.

During the next few weeks, you may notice water quality professionals taking water samples from different sources at schools and district support facilities. This activity will take place on weekends or early mornings because water that has "rested" for at least eight hours delivers the most valid test results (as compared to water that has repeatedly churned through the pipes and fixtures in our systems on weekdays).

I've ordered these tests because:

1. Given the water quality discoveries at other schools in the state, we must know the status of water quality in our schools and support facilities to alleviate any concerns you, students, parents, and patrons may have about lead in drinking water.
2. If we should find any water sources needing remediation, we need to take whatever remedial action is needed.

The organization conducting tests for us is an outside vendor. Using an outside company means our own maintenance staff can focus on the important work they do every day to support our schools, and not draw them off of other priorities for this special activity. I especially thank our maintenance and facilities department for diligently responding to concerns caused by incidents outside of our district and for retrieving old records and resources about prior water tests and repairs in preparation for our upcoming water tests.

As we've prepared for our own district testing, we've come to appreciate what goes into keeping our water safe, how safe our water sources actually are, and how fortunate we are compared to other areas in the state and country with conditions "just right" for troubled waters.

We are very fortunate to have three quality water districts supply water to schools and neighborhoods within Everett Public Schools:

1. [Silver Lake Water District](#)
2. [Alderwood Water District](#)
3. [City of Everett](#) (this water district recently released a [report on its water safety](#))

These entities oversee water quality at the "source." Homeowners and businesses have responsibility for water quality past the point of water district jurisdiction – the same is true for

school districts. Water districts in the state of Washington are required by law to test water quality every three years. You can see each water district's water test timeline and reports on their websites.

Contaminants reported in some Tacoma schools water systems are likely from those old schools' plumbing. Lead pipes in those older schools were used mostly before the 1960s, according to the [Alderwood Water District](#) website. *(The Alderwood website has some timely and helpful information about water quality, about what happened in Flint, Michigan, and about why we have less reason to worry about water here in our region than Flint, Michigan does.)*

When the test results are available, our Communications Office will make them accessible on our district website, and I will share them with you in a follow-up email. On Thursday morning you will be able to see a news release and more information on our website about the upcoming district water quality testing and background about previous testing in the district.

Warm wishes for your sunny weekend,

Gary



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