



STATE OF ARIZONA SCHOOL FACILITIES BOARD

Governor of Arizona
Douglas A. Ducey

Executive Director
Paul G. Bakalis

January 12, 2017

RE: Public School Screening Program for Lead in Drinking Water

Dear Superintendent:

Education and awareness about all childhood lead exposures is vital to ensuring a healthy environment for Arizona's children. We are writing to share information about an important **proactive** screening program that the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality is leading to test for the presence of lead in school drinking water. ADEQ is conducting this fast-track screening program with the Arizona School Facilities Board (SFB), the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), other agencies, public water systems, public schools and other volunteers and interested parties at **no charge** to schools statewide over the next six months.

While drinking water is not considered to be a common source of lead in Arizona, eliminating lead in drinking water is an important step to reduce children's overall exposure to lead in the environment, which can lead to serious, negative and long-term health effects. Many schools' drinking water never has been tested for lead. School drinking water can become contaminated with lead even when the facility's water provider is in compliance with lead drinking water regulations.

The purpose of this **proactive** school drinking water screening program is to identify whether school drinking water contains lead levels of concern for children's health, so that school districts can take actions necessary to address any problems identified.

As water moves through a school's plumbing system, lead from materials and fixtures that contain lead, such as water fountains, faucets and water heaters, can leach lead into the water. The risk of lead leaching into school drinking water is increased because schools' intermittent water use associated with operating schedules that commonly involve weekend closures and extended school breaks throughout the year.

To ensure maximum reach and the overall success of the screening program, it is critical that schools ADEQ contacts to participate provide assistance by collecting drinking water samples at their schools for testing at ADEQ's contracted certified labs.

The SFB thanks schools contacted by ADEQ in advance for their timely participation and assistance and looks forward to working with districts and schools to implement any facility remedial actions needed to address any problems identified by this screening program.

The full description of the ADEQ Public School Drinking Water Lead Screening Program, including program contacts, the screening program process, and specific resources for schools and parents, including a fact sheet, FAQ, drinking water sampling resources, school test results and other helpful information about childhood lead exposure can be viewed online at <http://www.azdeq.gov/LeadScreeningProg>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Bakalis', written on a light-colored background.

Paul G. Bakalis
Executive Director

cc: Trevor Baggione, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Jessica Rigler, Arizona Department of Health Services