

Navy reports results of lead testing

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The Navy reported on March 28 that a recent round of water testing at nine child care facilities has found lead above EPA-recommended levels at two child development centers in Hampton Roads.

The water outlets, which include two water fountains accessible to children, have been disconnected while corrective measures are taken. They were among the nearly 300 water outlets that have been tested to date. The Environmental Protection Agency's recommended level for action 20 parts per billion.

"Drinking water safety cannot be taken for granted," said Rear Adm. Tim Alexander, commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic. "The safety of our service members, staff members and their children are our top priority. We are committed to ensuring that our drinking water meets both the Navy and EPA environmental standards, and we will provide the best possible level of care that our service members and their families deserve."

Initial testing of 58 water outlets at the child care center at Joint Expeditionary Base Fort Story detected five faucets with levels above EPA recommended standards. Children did not have access to these outlets and did not use them for any purpose. Four of those faucets were in sinks not accessible to children and rarely used. These faucets were permanently disconnected. The other location was a kitchen faucet used by workers to rinse dishes before placing them in a dishwasher. The dishwashing apparatus was replaced and a sign was posted informing the staff not to drink from this fixture.

At the Naval Station Norfolk (NSN) Hampton Boulevard Child Development Center, 72 faucets were tested. Seven faucets tested above the recommended levels: five sinks used for hand washing and two drinking fountains. After replacing the faucet aerators, three of the sinks were retested and were below the EPA recommended level. The two other sinks cannot be reached by children and a sign was posted informing the staff not to drink from these fixtures. The two drinking fountains have been removed from the facility.

Testing is continuing at all area youth facilities on Navy installations in Hampton Roads. Employees are being trained on precautionary procedures to be taken at facilities yet to be tested.

As of the afternoon of March 29, of the 73 families with children in the JEB CDC, 66 were personally contacted, and seven families remained. At the NSN CDC, 134 families were told that traces of lead above the EPA-recommended levels were detected in the water, with 38 more remained to be personally notified.

The Navy will continue with the individual notifications until all families are personally contacted. Navy leadership is also available to discuss any concerns a family may have. Families may also call the Navy's Lead Information Line to discuss health care concerns they may have at 953-1598, or DSN 377-1598.



NORFOLK, Va. (March 28, 2012)- Liz Nashold, environmental director for Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, demonstrates how first-draw samples (250 ml) were collected from faucets at Hampton Roads Child Development Centers and Youth Centers. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends a lead screening level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) or less. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Scott Youngblood/Released)