

News Release

August 22, 2018

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County Examining Grant Union High School Water System

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Sacramento County Division of Public Health was informed that the results of the July testing of the small water system at the Twin Rivers Unified School District's Grant Union High School returned above the action level of 0.015 mg/L for lead and 1.3 mg/L for copper at three hand or bathroom sink locations. This routine testing is performed every three years per protocol set by Federal Environmental Protection Agency and State Water Resources Control Board.

Prior to this round of routine testing, Grant Union High School has had no previous lead/copper test results above the action limit. Although the recent test results exceeded the action limit, the levels do not present an immediate health risk. The routine testing protocol is required so that water systems can be effectively evaluated and investigated to ensure water quality and to identify potential issues early so that effective measures can be taken.

For the start of the school on Mon., Aug. 20, the Sacramento County Public Health advised Twin Rivers Unified out of an abundance of caution to take all its drinking water fountains offline and provide drinking water that bypasses the facility's existing plumbing until the source is determined or the results are within standard.

Twin Rivers Unified is cooperating and making proactive efforts to investigate and ensure the safety of students and staff. The district communicated the issue with student families and staff starting Aug. 17 via an automated phone call with supporting information available on their website and social media.

The following measures have been taken at Grant Union High School:

- School staff, parents and students have been notified.
- Drinking water fountains have been disconnected.
- Bottled water is available to students and staff until Sacramento County verifies that standards are met and the water is allowed to be used for drinking.
- Grant Union High School meals will be prepared at an approved offsite commercial kitchen or will provide meals that do not use water in the preparation.
- Kitchenware will be washed offsite and food surfaces cleaned with approved non-water cleaning solutions.

- Because lead/copper does not permeate the skin, water from the bathrooms and classroom sinks can be used for handwashing, and signs have been posted as a reminder to not drink the water.
- The Grant Union High School pool is closed.

“Public Health is working closely with Sacramento County Environmental Management Department and Twin Rivers Unified to ensure the health and safety of students, faculty and staff,” said Dr. Olivia Kasirye, Sacramento County Public Health Officer. “Though some test sites exceeded the action levels, we consider this low risk.”

Children and pregnant or nursing mothers are most at risk for health issues related to lead exposure. Exposure to lead can result in delays in physical and mental development in infants and children.

Follow-up Sampling Status:

On Fri., Aug 17, the July sampling sites locations were retested and sampling was also done at the water well that supplies the school with its water. The results from the well water sampling was non-detect for lead/copper. The results from the repeat sampling, although lower, confirm an exceedance of the action limit for lead at three of the five repeat sites and the copper action limit in all locations was not exceeded.

As a precaution, additional water sampling was conducted on Mon., Aug. 20, at five drinking water fountains. EMD received these results on Wed., Aug. 22, three of the five drinking water fountains tested were above the action level.

Together, these test results may indicate an issue with the plumbing or fixtures due to the age of the facility or water sitting in the pipes over the summer. However, additional steps are needed to isolate the cause.

Next Steps:

It is necessary to continue to examine the Grant Union High School water system. On August 22, Twin Rivers Unified expanded its water sampling to all facility sinks, drinking fountains and the pool. Those sampling results are expected as early as Wednesday, Aug. 29. All public health safety measures in place will continue until the source is determined or the results are within standard.

There are various reasons lead/copper can enter water systems, but typically it can be from the corrosion of pipes, plumbing components and plumbing fixtures.

Sampling Protocol:

Routine sampling protocol require that school staff or licensed contractors take the water samples using a specific procedure. These samples are sent to a state certified lab and the results of the sampling is provided to the Sacramento County Environmental Management



Department of Health Services
Division of Public Health

News Release

Department to ensure that small water systems deliver safe, adequate, and dependable potable water.

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* Attached: Frequently Asked Questions, general information regarding lead in water, and the Grant High School Tier 2 public notice.