



June 13, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing today to make you aware of some changes to provincial regulations which govern drinking water in schools and child care centres.

Since 2007, the Ontario government has required that school boards flush water pipes in schools on a daily or weekly basis, sample and test drinking water, maintain logs and report drinking water test results of the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. This regulation has required boards only to sample and test water for lead annually at one location in the building.

Effective July 1, 2017 amendments to the regulation will require that all fixtures used for drinking water or in the preparation of food must be flushed for 10 seconds. The amended regulation also makes it necessary for samples to be collected and tested at every drinking water fixture in the school. For water fountains in child care centres and for students in JK to Grade 3, boards will have until January 1, 2020 to complete the scheduled testing; for fixtures available to students in Grades 4 through 12, boards will have until January 1, 2022. Therefore, the Board will meet the 2020 deadline for all elementary schools; and the 2022 deadline for secondary. Fixtures not used for drinking water, such as bathroom taps and hand sinks, are not required to be tested; however, they must be posted with signage indicating that the water is not to be consumed.

In the event that levels of lead exceed ministry guidelines in a flushed sample of water, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and local public health officials must be notified. In such a case, the fixture would be bagged off and signage would be posted to indicate the fountain is out of service and will remain so until the matter is resolved. This can take place through a variety of measures – increased flushing, installation of a new lead-free fixture, or installation of an SNS/ANSI certified filter, which extracts lead.

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board will be working over the summer months to install the new signage and develop plans to complete the flushing and testing protocols in keeping with the ministry's timelines. As always, the health and safety of our students, staff and visitors to our buildings are always our number one priority. If you have any questions, please contact your principal.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you and your family a safe, relaxing and fun summer break, filled with God's blessings!

Sincerely,
Dan Parr
Director of Education