

**<http://csus.edu/sacstatenews/campusupdate/>**

## **Water-Quality Testing on Campus: FAQs**

### **When did campus-wide water-quality testing start, and why?**

Dr. Jeffery Foran, Chair of the Department of Environmental Studies at Sacramento State, along with Dr. Justin Miller-Schulze, Dr. Catherine Ishikawa, two graduate students, and nine undergraduate students, received approval to broaden their experiential learning research project to include the testing of 449 sinks, drinking fountains, and bottle-filling stations across campus.

The testing took place from Jan. 9-12, 2017, shortly after Winter Break on campus.

### **What were the results of the testing?**

The team tested “first draw” samples, meaning they were taken first thing in the morning and after a period of non-use between semesters.

Preliminary results from “first draw” samples require further testing and analysis to fully establish lead concentration levels. The additional testing and analysis will be done as soon as possible by third-party consultants.

The testing revealed that 27 samples of the 449 stations, or 6 percent, had lead concentrations at or above the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) “action level” for lead in water (15 parts per billion). Those 27 samples, plus an additional 58, for a total of 19 percent, had lead levels in excess of the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) tolerance level for lead in bottled water (5 ppb).

After these levels were reported to the administration, Facilities Management immediately turned off all 85 identified sources of water. They will remain shut off until further testing and analysis are completed.

### **Where on campus are the most elevated lead levels?**

Eureka Hall, Folsom Hall, Placer Hall, the Shasta Theater, and Sierra and Sutter residence halls immediately had their affected water sources shut off.

As part of ongoing mitigation measures, water filters already have been installed at the drinking fountains in Sierra and Sutter residence halls. They will undergo further testing before they are returned to use.

### **What about the rest of the water sources on campus that haven’t been shut off? What were their results?**

Of the 449 stations tested, 364 stations were found to have levels within the FDA tolerance for lead in bottled water (5 ppb) and remain on. The University will continue testing, since not all water stations have been tested.

### **What are the lead standards for water?**

The EPA's maximum contaminant level goal in drinking water is 0. At the same time, California has set a public health goal of 0.2 ppb for any water. These goals are more stringent than the EPA "action level" of 15 ppb, which also is the regulatory threshold for the State Water Resources Control Board.

### **What is the public health threat?**

A safe campus is our highest priority. Based upon the "first draw" preliminary sampling, detected lead levels would not pose a significant health threat to most people. Further testing and analysis, however, are required to fully determine lead concentration levels in drinking fountains, sinks, and bottle-filling stations.

Groups most sensitive to lead exposure are children under the age of 15, and pregnant and/or nursing women. Such individuals may want to refrain from drinking water from campus drinking fountains, sinks, or bottle-filling stations until further testing is completed.

The amount of lead in the body can be measured in the blood. Student Health and Counseling Services is available to students for physician consultation and blood lead testing as appropriate at no charge. Interested students may make an appointment online or by calling Student Health and Counseling Services at (916) 278-6461. Faculty and staff are encouraged to consult with their health-care provider; if necessary, a blood lead test is available through Student Health and Counseling Services by appointment at no charge.

### **Where does the lead come from?**

Lead can enter drinking water through pipes and fixtures. For more about lead in drinking water, please review the information provided by the EPA here: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>.

### **What about the quality of drinking water at the source?**

The Sacramento State campus receives its water from the City of Sacramento, which delivers water that meets all federal and state public health standards. The city's most recent annual report indicates that lead results were non-detect for all of the city's samples – all below the EPA lead "action limit" of 15 ppb: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Utilities/Education/water-quality>.

### **What are the next steps?**

The University will be bringing in third-party consultants to conduct additional sampling to fully determine lead concentration levels.

A Town Hall with health experts and University officials was held Thursday, Jan. 26, in the University Union, Redwood Room, to answer questions from the campus community.

Bottled water will be offered at Folsom Hall; AIRC, Room 2004; the Student Organizations and Leadership office on the second floor of the Union; the Office of Admissions, Lassen Hall, Room 1102; and The WELL.

If you have questions, faculty and staff should contact Steve Leland in Environmental Health and Safety at (916) 278-5174. Students should contact Student Health and Counseling Services at (916) 278-6461.

Watch for updates here on this page.

*Updated: Jan. 26, 2017; 2 p.m.*