



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
PACIFIC AIR FORCES**

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Kadena Air Base is committed to protecting student, teacher, and staff health. To ensure that protection, the 18th Medical Group Bioenvironmental Engineering (BE) flight started to conduct a comprehensive baseline testing for lead in the water at the base's Department of Defense Schools in April 2015.

Why Test School Drinking Water for Lead?

In the Lead Contamination and Control Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established a lead concentration action level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) for drinking water in high-priority child facilities. Children under 6 years old are at highest risk because of their rapid growth. The Act mandated the replacement, repair, or permanent removal of water coolers that were not lead-free. Additional sampling, other than requirements associated with water coolers, is voluntary. Kadena has proactively adopted the voluntary provisions.

Is Our Drinking Water Safe?

Yes, our water is safe. Of the 1,432 faucets sampled, only eight faucets with elevated lead levels were identified as high priority fixtures that are considered a regular source for drinking and cooking (e.g. fountain or kitchen sink). Minimal risk is posed to students since these fixtures are not the sole source of the children's daily water intake. Immediate actions in Table 1 were taken prior to the start of the 2015-2016 school year to prevent future consumption from these outlets. Kadena's 18th Civil Engineer Group is working with the schools to develop permanent remediation actions and resampling will be conducted for each high-priority fixture. Notices were posted above medium or low priority faucets that are not considered a major source for consumption warning staff and students to not drink from those faucets with elevated lead results (e.g. restrooms, chemistry labs, etc).

Table 1. Elevated Lead Sampling Results in High Priority Faucets

<i>School</i>	<i>Bldg</i>	<i>Faucet Type</i>	<i>Immediate Actions Taken</i>
Kadena Elementary School	2415	Room J21, Kitchen sink (dishwash area)	"Do not cook or drink" signs posted.
		Room M7, Fountain/Sink Combination	"Do not drink" signs posted, fountain placed out of order, valves closed and unit unplugged. Fountain prioritized for replacement.
Kadena Middle School	9399	Rm 507, Kitchen sink	School under renovation. Fixture will be resampled after renovations are complete.
Kadena High School	9490	Room 1170, Kitchen sink (food prep area)	"Do not cook or drink" signs posted. AAFES to use sink in adjacent area for food prep until fixtures can be replaced and resampling conducted. Sink prioritized for replacement.
	9493	Hall A114, Fountain	"Do not drink" signs posted, fountain placed out of order, valves closed, and unit unplugged. Fountain prioritized for replacement.
	9495	Ballfield, Fountain (PVC + hose bib, multiplayer fountain/water drench station)	"Do not drink" signs posted.
Stearley Heights	2261	Rm 106, Nurses Office	"Do not drink" signs posted.
	2279	Rm 110, Kitchen sink (dishwash area)	"Do not cook or drink" signs posted.

What is the source of lead?

Lead in a water sample can originate from the outlet fixture, upstream plumbing, or from the distribution system. Kadena annually tests the drinking water distribution system for lead; in 2014 the reported maximum lead concentration was only 5 ppb, an indication any elevated lead levels in the child care and school facilities is related to fixtures or internal plumbing and not in the water supply. Most fixtures testing high for lead fall into one of two categories: 1) older facility fixtures pre-dating lead-free construction options, or 2) non-drinking water fixtures likely never intended to be lead-free (e.g. chemistry, biology, physics laboratories). The first national standard designed to minimize the amount of lead in plumbing fixtures was not available until 1998. Many faucets and water outlets constructed and installed prior to this time will have higher lead content and thus leach more lead into stagnant water that is allowed to sit within the fixture during periods of non-use. Simply flushing stagnant water from faucets greatly reduces potential lead exposures. Sampling results indicate flushing as little as one standard measuring cup of water from the faucet will reduce lead content below 20 ppb for the majority of the fixtures with elevated lead results.

How Can I Learn More?

Parents and staff may access a copy of all water testing results in each school's administrative offices or at this link: (<http://www.kadena.af.mil/library/communitynotes.asp>). Please feel free to speak with your school's facility manager if you have any questions about the affected fixtures. The facility manager is also prepared to show you the location of the affected outlets. Parents should remind their children to drink water from approved sources, such as bottled water, drinking fountains and faucets identified by their teachers. The 18th Medical Group senior pediatrician confirms that if any child had previous exposure to lead, it would be unlikely for any symptoms to be present today. However, parents with concerns are encouraged to contact their child's provider through MiCARE or telephone consult. For more information about water quality on Kadena Air Base, contact Bioenvironmental Engineering at 634-4752.

The health and safety of our children is one of our highest priorities, as evidenced by our stringent sampling program and proactive notification process. We will continue to keep you informed, and we look forward to continued dialogue addressing any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



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