



Yellowknife Education District No. 1
Commission scolaire publique n°1 de Yellowknife

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Good afternoon families,

I am writing to let you know that the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has received follow-up test results that confirm elevated lead levels in the drinking water at N.J. Macpherson School.

I recognize that this news will be difficult to receive and that you will have many questions.

As you're aware, previous water testing had been done at N.J. Macpherson. While random sample testing taken on March 11 indicated levels below Health Canada's guideline, results received August 21 indicated levels slightly above Health Canada's guidelines. The identified water sources of concern were marked off and have not been used since.

All 22 sinks and fountains used for drinking or food preparation at the school were tested. Of those, five fixtures showed Tier 2 lead levels above Health Canada's guideline of 5 micrograms per litre (5 µg/L). Tier 2 samples are collected after flushing the tap for five minutes, followed by 30 minutes of stagnation. One additional result is still pending; however, in the interest of protecting public health, that site is being treated as impacted.

All drinking water fountains and water bottle fill stations were below the guidelines.

As a precaution, the Chief Public Health Officer has issued a Health Order requiring the school to flush the whole system daily and provide alternative safe drinking water until mitigation measures are complete. Drinking fountains will remain available for use.

Health Information and Resources

Booking an appointment

If you are concerned about possible exposure, you can request an appointment with Primary Care by completing the [Callback Request Form](#) and selecting "YK Primary

Care Regarding Public Health Order.” Appointments will include blood work at the same visit.

Information

For more information on lead and your health, visit:

- <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/environmental-contaminants/lead-and-your-health>

For more information on lead testing in NWT Schools, visit:

- https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/newsroom?search_api_views_fulltext=lead&f%5B0%5D=field_news_department%3A94

Early next week the GNWT will hold a media briefing to answer questions on mitigation measures in Range Lake North, William McDonald and N.J. Macpherson schools.

With the return to school just around the corner, I know that this news is distressing. Please know that Yellowknife Education District No. 1 is working closely with the GNWT to take necessary steps to address this issue and that safe alternative water sources will be available to staff and students until the issue is resolved. The health and safety of our staff and students is of the utmost importance.



Thank you,

Shirley Zouboules
Superintendent
Yellowknife Education District #1