# Example Letter to Parents and Caregivers

<Date>

<Point of Contact>

<School Address>

Dear Parent or Caregiver:

We would like to tell you about our plans to reduce potential exposure to lead in drinking water in our school. Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) is requiring <schools > to reduce children’s exposure to lead from school drinking water by taking steps that include testing drinking water for lead; and taking appropriate and necessary actions to correct problems if necessary.

Lead is a toxic heavy metal that is harmful if inhaled or swallowed. Children are especially susceptible to lead exposure because their bodies absorb the metal at higher rates than the average adult. Exposure to lead can cause reduced IQ, hearing impairment, reduced attention span and poor classroom performance.

DPHHS’s *Lead Reduction in School Drinking Water Program* requires actions to reduce potential exposure to lead in drinking water through testing and taking action. In response, <Anytown Elementary School> is taking the following actions:

* We are launching an education and awareness initiative to provide **training** to school personnel, parents, custodians, and the community at large regarding the risks of lead poisoning and the means of mitigating these risks.
* We are developing a sampling plan so we can conduct **testing** at outlets where students and staff get water for drinking and cooking. The results of the testing will be available to the public at [Deq.mt.gov/Lead](http://deq.mt.gov/water/drinkingwater/LeadInSchools) .
* Optional if test results are high (provide specifics): We are **taking action** to reduce lead in drinking water, as well as communicate to parents, staff, and the larger school community about risks, testing results, and recommended actions.

[Optional: Recognizing that communication is key, a *Lead in Drinking Water* Information Display is being set up in the school office. Here, materials, school handouts, and testing updates will be available throughout the day. ]

[Optional: We are also in the process of creating a staffed information center in our library, where parents will be able to ask questions, get answers and offer input.] [Optional: The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has a website dedicated to providing information on lead in drinking water. You can visit the website to learn more about the risks of lead in drinking water and the efforts we are undertaking to protect the school community. Deq.mt.gov/Lead

[Optional: Parents, teachers, and members of the broader school community can also follow the school on social media to get updates on the lead in drinking water program. The school will post announcements and upcoming events to the school’s Facebook page to help keep the community informed.]

[Optional: Additionally, we will be scheduling a Lead in Drinking Water Workshop in conjunction with an upcoming <PTA meeting/open house>, so watch for further information about these activities as announcements are sent home with your child.]

In compliance with the lead sampling program we have recently completed testing of all locations at which children obtain drinking water at the NAME OF YOUR FACILITY.  Most locations showed levels well below the drinking water lead advisory, however, [# and description] locations were found to have elevated levels. These locations were immediately taken out of service and will remain out of service until the fixtures are corrected and testing indicates that lead is below the action level.  While the ultimate goal is for zero lead exposure, the action level in drinking water is currently set at 5 parts per billion (ppb) or 0.005 milligrams per liter (mg/L) as the threshold to implement remedial actions.

Testing results for NAME OF YOUR FACILITY were obtained as follows: [FILL IN WITH YOUR FACILITY LOCATIONS AND SAMPLE RESULTS]

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Test Location** | **Sample Date** | **Lab Report Date** | **Stagnant Lead, ppb (mg/L)** |
| 1. Classroom #105
 | Nov 1, 2018 | Nov 15, 2018 | 3.4 ppb (0.0034 mg/L) |
| 1. Classroom #201
 | Nov 1, 2018 | Nov 15, 2018 | 4.9 ppb (0.0049 mg/L) |
| 1. Nurses Office Sink
 | Nov 1, 2018 | Nov 15, 2018 | 2.7 ppb (0.0027 mg/L) |
| 1. Kitchen Food Prep Sink
 | Nov 1, 2018 | Nov 15, 2018 | <1 ppb (<0.001 mg/L) |
| 1. Main Hallway Bubbler
 | Nov 1, 2018 | Nov 15, 2018 | 2.6 ppb (0.0026 mg/L) |

We are available to answer any questions and provide any additional information you may need. Please contact NAME, TITLE, PHONE, EMAIL.  In addition, the state has additional background information and resources available at http://deq.mt.gov/water/drinkingwater/LeadInSchools”.

Include Results:

Sincerely,

<Principal or Administrator Signature>

 <Title>

This template is from the Environmental Protection Agency and has been slightly modified for the Lead Reduction in Schools program. Please edit for your school’s audience and use.