

SCS Community – this spring, after what the folks in Flint, Michigan and right here in Ithaca had experienced, we wrote to you about the development of a proactive approach for ensuring the safety of our students and staff by testing for lead in our drinking water. Working with the county health department, the engineers from our architect’s office, and local safety office at BOCES, we developed a plan for testing for both lead *and* copper. While we know that the quality of water coming *to* our buildings is of high quality (see the most recent Annual Water Quality Report at [http://www.villageofskaneateles.com/publications/cat\\_view/22-publications/192-water-system-docs.html](http://www.villageofskaneateles.com/publications/cat_view/22-publications/192-water-system-docs.html)), our concerns were with what might exist because of the piping through which the water travels. This testing was completed in mid-June and we do not anticipate the results back until mid-August. Once we have that information, we will notify the community and discuss any implications.

In the meantime, we are continuing to replace our water fountains with filtered water dispensers that you may have seen in various locations within the schools. These units serve as both drinking fountain and water bottle refilling stations. Not only do these stations filter out lead and chlorine amongst other things, they are also environmentally sensible in that they allow us to reduce the number of plastic bottles that we use and dispose of and are more energy efficient than traditional drinking fountains.

**Additional Testing:**

As we noted in last week’s article (see <http://www.skanschools.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=783>) we are currently under construction to remove asbestos from our middle and high schools. This was the result of extensive testing that was done throughout the facility on the presence of asbestos, PCBs, and vermiculite in particular. As science progresses, regulations continue to evolve in terms of safe building materials and practices. To comply with these regulations, we must remove hazardous materials with each building project that we undertake.

Similarly, to ensure that our buildings are as safe as possible for students, staff and community members, we will be conducting tests to determine if radon is present in any of our facilities. While we have no reason to believe that this might be the case, it is good to have testing to confirm our beliefs.

We will continue to communicate about these results of our testing, about the progress on our building projects, and, starting this fall, about our next building project – *Project 2021*.

Thanks very much and please do not hesitate to call, email, or come see us to discuss any questions or concerns that you might have.

Ken Slentz  
Superintendent of Schools