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Fort Worth ISD replacing water fountains due to lead contamination

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FORT WORTH, Texas - Voluntary **tests** by the Fort Worth Independent School District found they exceeded recommended limits on lead in the water.

The district said it decided to test the drinking water at its school because of recent national news stories about lead contamination and concerns from parents. There are no **local**, state or federal testing requirements, but Superintendent Kent Scribner said lead in the water "can be an impediment to a child's ability to learn and to their health."

A report identified several problem areas with lead in the water exceeding the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended action level of 20 parts per billion of lead. Fort Worth **schools** are using the more restrictive measure of 15 ppb that the city uses for its water supply.

"Testing allowed us to identify older style water fixtures, such as water fountains, that were causing some higher than expected sampling levels," said Fort Worth ISD District Chief of Operations **Art** Cavazos. "We have begun a program of removing and replacing those fixtures across the district. Our subsequent sampling has shown this to be an effective measure to return lead levels to below the recommended EPA action levels."

The district is **working** to correct the problem areas. Anything that can't be replaced will be shut off, the district said.

Along with new plumbing, the district also has a new **policy** of flushing drinking water sources every day to keep fresh water in the system.

Meanwhile, **parents** at South Oak Cliff High School in Dallas protested on campus Tuesday because they fear the water is contaminated. The school's principal listened to their complaints, but said tests show the lead levels at the school are well below the EPA's recommended action level and considered safe.

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