



## Water Testing Policy Saplings Nature School September 2024

### ***Rationale***

In compliance with the following Acts, the SAP Association ("the Board") has developed a policy for testing drinking water in the school.

- [Drinking Water Protection Act](#)
- [Drinking Water Protection Regulation](#)
- [Public Health Act](#)
- [Independent School Act](#)

### ***Policy***

The Board will develop and maintain a water testing program for testing lead content in drinking water in our school facility, reporting of the results, and implementing mitigation strategies to eliminate or reduce any risks to students and staff.

The Board will consult with Vancouver Coastal Health to develop a water quality lead testing program for drinking water in the school. The program will include:

1. Risk assessment
2. Water testing
3. Water Flushing
4. Communication plan
5. Mitigation strategies

### ***Procedures***

#### **Risk Assessment**

Regular water testing will be conducted before the school year begins, and no later than August 31. If testing finds that lead levels exceed concentration of 0.005 mg/L (based on maximum allowable concentration as per "Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality" by Health Canada), the Board must:

1. Inform the Independent Schools branch,
2. Work with the appropriate Health Authority, and
3. Undertake recommended mitigation strategies.

#### **Water Testing**

All outlets that provide drinking water in the school will be tested annually for lead content before the start of the school year. Once a program and sampling method has been established beyond that, the Board will complete

testing for lead content, plus any other contaminants deemed appropriate by Vancouver Coastal Health and the school, once every 3 years.

The Board will work with Vancouver Coastal Health to determine a testing program for Saplings Nature School. The testing procedure and amount of samples taken shall be determined in consultation with Vancouver Coastal Health. Results will be shared with Vancouver Coastal Health and the Ministry of Education.

### **Daily Water Flushing when required**

1. Run the cold water tap at the end of the branch (main faucet in the kitchen where water is typically taken for drinking or food preparation) for at least 5 minutes.
2. After completing at least 5 minutes of flushing, all other taps in the centre including the main faucet must be opened for 10 seconds.
3. The Flushing Record Log posted in the kitchen will be initiated by the staff who performs this operation.
4. The staff will record the date, start time (select taps), end time, location and name of the person who conducted the flushing and any comments on the log.
5. If an aerator or other device that treats the water is installed, it should not be removed when flushing.

### **Communication**

In the event that testing finds drinking water concentrations of lead at or above the maximum acceptable level, the Board will:

1. Immediately inform the Ministry of Education Independent Schools Branch.
2. Work collaboratively with Vancouver Coastal Health to communicate the results of lead content in drinking water to parents, students, and staff by describing the following:
  - rationale for testing lead in drinking water,
  - identify partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health to work toward a solution,
  - state results of sampling,
  - identify mitigation strategies implemented or being considered by the school,
  - provide contact information for parents, students, and staff to request further information.

### **Mitigation Strategies**

If sample results reveal lead levels exceed concentration of 0.005 mg/L (based on maximum allowable concentration--[Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality](#) by Health Canada), the school will, in consultation with Vancouver Coastal Health, undertake mitigation strategies which may include:

1. A flushing regime
2. Deactivation of water sources and supplemental signage
3. Installation of filtration systems
4. Plumbing upgrades
5. Other steps that result in reducing to acceptable levels the exposure of staff and students to lead.