Testing for Lead in Public School Drinking Water

Tennessee State Government

Based on Results Submitted on or Before November 18, 2020

What does Tennessee Law state about water testing in schools?

- T.C.A § 49-2-133 (2018) went into effect on January 1, 2019.
- Drinking water sources must be tested in all schools built prior to January 1, 1998.
- Each local school district must develop a policy to test drinking water sources for lead.
- If results exceed 15 parts per billion (ppb) but are less than 20 ppb, the school must test the sources annually until retesting confirms a level less than 15 ppb.
- If results are greater than or equal to 20 ppb:
  - The drinking source must be removed from service.
  - The commissioner of the TN Department of Environment and Conservation, the commissioner of the TN Department of Health, the local department of health, the local governing body, and the TN Department of Education will be notified within 24 hours of the test result.
  - Parents and guardians of enrolled students must be notified within 5 business days of the test result.
  - Retesting must occur within 90 days of any corrective action.
- Only results greater than or equal to 20 ppb must be reported to the agencies listed above.
- To learn more about testing for lead in school drinking water, go to: https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/environmental/healthy-schools/hs/drinking-water.html

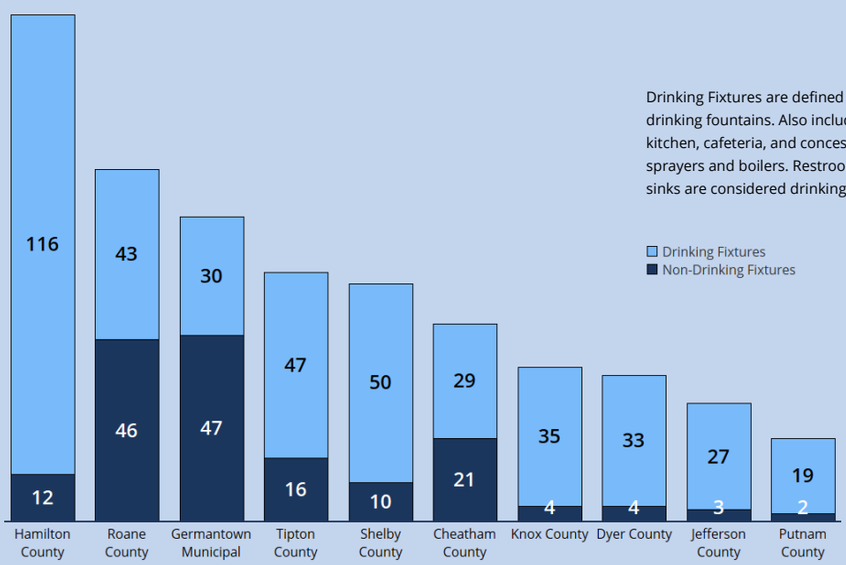
51 TN school districts reported at least one elevated result

42 Counties had at least one school with an elevated result

606 Drinking fixtures with elevated results were reported

Number of Schools Reporting Elevated Results by County

Top 10 School Districts with Greatest Number of Fixtures with Elevated Lead Levels



Drinking Fixtures are defined as all ice makers, bubblers, and drinking fountains. Also includes fixtures located in the kitchen, cafeteria, and concession stand areas but excluding sprayers and boilers. Restroom, locker room, and classroom sinks are considered drinking fixtures excluding mop sinks.

Data Source:

Results reported by school districts via Formstack at:
https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/lead_testing_of_school_drinking_water_reporting