

Primo Water Corporation Logo

Primo® Water Provides Epumps And Free Water To Southeast Middle School In Response To High Levels Of Lead

October 24, 2018

Guilford County Schools have seen lead levels as high as Flint, Michigan

Winston-Salem, NC (October 24, 2018)—Primo Water provided 65 portable electric water pumps and over 150 five-gallon bottles of water to Southeast Middle School for each classroom.

Primo Water's donation allows for access to safe, lead-free water. Each classroom at Southeast Middle School has a five-gallon water bottle fit with an e-pump for students and teachers. The students don't have to leave the classroom to get water and parents can rest assured their children have access to safer, better water.

"My son just started as a sixth grader in the school this year. I don't want my son drinking that mess," said BJ Bodkin, parent of a Southeast Middle School student and General Manager at Primo Water. Bodkin discovered the issue through local news reporting's and his son's school meetings. He realized that as an employee of Primo Water, he could offer a solution for the school.

Results of a voluntary test in Guilford County Schools found three schools with elevated levels of lead in their faucets and drinking fountains. **Southeast Middle School found extremely high levels that measured 194 parts per billion (ppb)**. The EPA's Lead and Copper Rule states that if the lead concentration reaches over 15 ppb, action is required. However, researchers studying Flint, Michigan's water suggest 5 ppb can be cause for concern.

In Flint, MI, the highest level in a sample studied by Virginia Tech showed lead levels of 158 ppb. **Southeast Middle School saw lead levels higher than that of Flint's highest-level sample from this study.**

Schools and daycares are not required by law to test tap water. Other Guilford County Schools found lead, but none of these schools saw the type of elevation found in Southeast Middle School.

The problem is the dated faucets and fixtures. If the faucet was made before 1986, it's likely to have been soldered with lead. The water fountains within Guilford County Schools also contained elevated levels of lead.

According to Bodkin, "The brand of faucets in use in these schools were actually recalled in 1990 but have continued to be used for nearly 40 years. They were here when I was attending middle school."

The faucet is where the water stops, and that lead saturated water continues to seep into the water when the tap isn't running. Flushing can help, but only temporarily. If it continues to sit-- lead can leach back into the water.

Primo Water CEO, Matt Sheehan is a father himself and adamant about keeping kids safe from tap water. "It's a silent enemy. We need to be testing more often and protecting our children—especially in schools."

Primo Water's donation has kept students from using the tap water since September. The goal for lead levels is zero. When exposure occurs, serious health issues can result. Children are especially at risk. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that **no safe blood level in children has been identified.**

"This isn't an easy fix when you're talking about infrastructure. Putting in new faucets only fixes a small part of the problem. We need to do more and do better for our kids and I believe Primo Water is the solution," said Bodkin.

At the heart of Primo Water is challenging the assumption that tap water is safe to drink.

"The last thing I want is our children to be harmed because we weren't proactive enough to fix it. This has been going on for way too long," said Sheehan.

If a school near you is experiencing high levels of lead or contaminants in tap water or have questions about how Primo Water is helping the community, get in touch by contacting Primo at <https://primowater.com/contact-us/>.

About Primo Water Corporation

Primo Water Corporation (Nasdaq:PRMW) is an environmentally and ethically responsible company with a purpose of inspiring healthier lives through better water. Primo Water is North America's leading single source provider of water dispensers, multi-gallon purified bottled water, and self-service refill water. Primo Water's Dispensers, Exchange and Refill products are available in over 45,000 retail locations and online throughout the United States and Canada. For more information and to learn more about Primo Water, please visit our website at www.primowater.com.

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