
**150 SINKS AND WATER FOUNTAINS UPGRADED IN TIME FOR BACK TO SCHOOL
REMAINDER TO BE COMPLETE BY END OF OCTOBER**

Monday, August 29, 2016

VICTORIA, BC – Responsive to preliminary water testing completed in June noting elevated lead levels in some schools, every school in the Greater Victoria School District will have new filter systems in at least two of the highest use fountains, all staff rooms, and all cooking facilities, prior to students and teachers returning to school in September. The remainder of required upgrades will continue on a prioritized basis through September and be completed by the end of October.

It was initially thought that most fountains would need to be replaced, however it was determined that in many cases, filtration systems could be added to the impacted water fountains and sinks at a lesser cost while effectively addressing the elevated levels of lead. In addition to new filters, the established routine of flushing water systems three times per day, will continue across all schools until all filters have been installed. Fountains or sinks not yet upgraded will be clearly marked for students and staff.

A program and budget for system wide testing of all schools and necessary upgrades was approved by the School District Board in June upon receiving preliminary testing results. The program remains within the approved budget of \$200,000.

Testing by an independent environmental consultant, Goode Environmental Services, recommended by Island Health, has now been completed in all 47 schools. The detailed results are available on the District website.

The Greater Victoria School District is proud to provide quality education for approximately 19,000 students in 27 elementary schools, 10 middle Schools, and seven secondary schools. Each year, over 650 adult learners register with our Continuing Education Program. Our District also offers a variety of programs of choice and two elementary schools of choice.

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ATTACHMENTS:

1. "School District 61 Water Quality" report prepared by Goode Environmental Services
2. Water Quality Upgrades - Information Bulletin
3. Detailed testing results for each school

For media inquiries, please contact:

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