

LEAD MAY BE IN WATER OF PRE-1975 HOMES

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annually, with 99.3 per cent of samples found to be in compliance with provincial legislation for lead limits in drinking water.

"We're asking the province to please be just as diligent at getting the lead out of our schools," said Burton.

The region, which is responsible for water purification throughout the four local municipalities, has replaced all pipes in the public system that were manufactured with lead and old cast iron water mains.

But lead fixtures, including taps and water fountains, were historically used in school plumbing throughout the province, and many remain in place today as the main culprits of elevated lead levels in drinking water.

In Halton's aging school system, the Toronto Star investigation revealed that the Halton District School Board had 304 exceedances of lead regulations



Torstar file photo

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in the past two years - one of the highest totals among school boards in the province.

Board officials say that if exceedances are detected, measures are taken to address the issue, including flushing the lines, installing filters and removing

the lead-laced fixtures where possible.

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, who seconded Burton's motion, said the resolution sends an important message to the province on addressing the issue as a whole.

THE ISSUE: LEAD PIPES IN SCHOOLS LOCALLY AND ACROSS ONTARIO

LOCAL IMPACT: HALTON COUNCILLORS ARE DEMANDING ACTION TO MAKE DRINKING WATER IN ALL SCHOOLS SAFE

"We need to have the confidence in all of our schools that the lead is out of our pipes," he said.

Oakville Coun. Tom Adams shared similar sentiments.

"I think it's important to deal with the schools and put pressure on those who have the power and responsibility to change it," he said.

With lead being a commonly used building material decades ago, region officials have cautioned that there may be lead in

the water from pipe fittings and connections in older homes built before 1975.

Public works commissioner Jim Harnum told council that since the media coverage of lead in Canada's drinking water began a few weeks ago, Halton has received about 300 calls from residents on the issue, with almost half of them requesting that the region check their properties for lead pipes. None were found, he reported.

The region has also recently been in 14,000 homes for water meter replacement across Halton and didn't find any lead pipes through this process either, Harnum noted.

He said the region will be adding information to its website that will help homeowners check their own properties for lead pipes.

For more information visit halton.ca or hdsb.ca.

STORY BEHIND THE STORY

Following a lengthy investigation by the Toronto Star about lead in Canada's drinking water, our newsroom has been following the local reaction, including action by Halton politicians.



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