

# Local schools test above average for lead levels

**MELANIE CUMMINGS**  
Special to The IFP

Lead levels in seven of Halton's Catholic schools—including two in Halton Hills—have tested above the provincial standard of 10 micrograms.

New standards for daily and weekly flushing and annual summertime testing of water systems in schools, day nurseries and private schools were set down by the provincial government in June.

Results from tests conducted over the summer were released to trustees of the Halton Catholic District School Board last week.

Standing water levels were above

10 micrograms in seven schools including Georgetown's St. Francis of Assisi and Acton's St. Joseph.

However, all schools after flushing for five minutes had less than 10 micrograms of lead.

But St. Francis of Assisi, which was built in 1971, hovered close at 9.8 micrograms of lead still present in the water.

"If we did this test now at this school, I suspect it would be lower," said superintendent of facility management services Giacomo Corbaccio.

Testing is ordered in summertime because this is when the problem of lead appears worst.

Curiously the lead level tested

higher after flushing in one Milton school and three in Oakville.

Corbaccio said that it's thought the source of contamination in these four cases could be lead in the soldering that joins the copper pipes. He also assured trustees that there are no lead pipes remaining in any Halton Catholic school.

If the lead content figure goes higher than 10 micrograms custodians have been advised to correct the problem by flushing the system for longer than five minutes, said Corbaccio.

According to the Ministry of Education, children under the age of seven are particularly vulnerable to the effects of lead.

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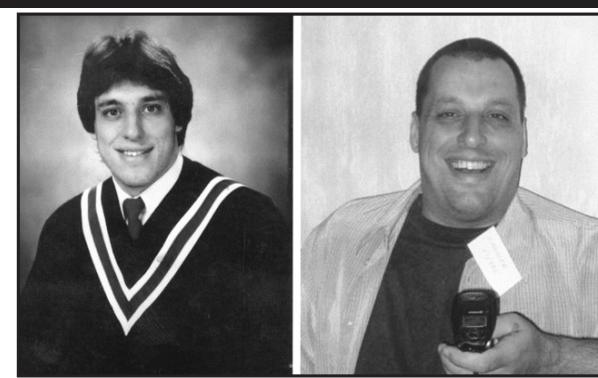
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