



To: Occupants of South Building  
From: Catherine Brennan, Executive Director of Environment, Health and Safety  
Date: September 19, 2022  
Re: Lead in Drinking Fountain

Occupants of South Building,

Recent testing by Environment, Health and Safety revealed detectable levels of lead in one drinking fountain in your building. The fountain, a white porcelain fountain found on the basement level, is the only fixture of the eight fixtures tested (six fountains, one ice machine and one breakroom sink) in South Building to show detectable lead levels. The fountain has been removed from service, and signage directs people not to use it. It will be replaced.

The University uses the Environmental Protection Agency sampling protocol for testing fixtures for detectable lead. This protocol involves collecting a first sample in the morning, followed by a flushing protocol to clear stagnant water from the lines. Environment, Health and Safety personnel return in the afternoon to collect another sample for comparison with the first sample to determine the effect of flushing.

Using this protocol, the first test on the fountain came back with a result of 515 ppb. The second test, after the flushing protocol, came back with a result of 254 ppb. Lead in drinking water may arise from corrosion of lead plumbing materials within fixtures.

Lead can cause serious health problems. Information about the effects of lead in water can be found on the [CDC's website](#) and on the [EPA's website](#).

We are alerting staff and faculty in your building to any fixtures that have traces of lead and will replace those fixtures. While the EPA requires public water systems to take action to lower lead levels in the water when testing shows a lead level of 15 ppb or higher, we are taking action for any measurable lead. Using that as a guidance, fixtures on campus showing detectable levels of lead will be replaced.

Questions can be directed to the Environment, Health and Safety Department at 919-962-5507. Updates can also be seen at the [EHS website](#). If you have further concerns, please contact the University Employee Occupational Health Clinic at 919-966-9119.

Thank you,

Catherine Brennan

Executive Director of Environment, Health and Safety

UNC-Chapel Hill