

Remediation Plan

July 8, 2016

The following is the remediation plan for Burr Elementary School. The plan includes bypassing and replacing all existing water lines at the school. The interior work (plumbing lines) will be conducted by contractor P.J. Kennedy. The exterior work (main service line) will be done by the City of Newton Department of Public Works.

Rationale

Testing conducted this spring suggested there were issues with both exterior pipes channeling water into the school, as well as interior pipes servicing the water bubblers. It is likely that the elevated lead levels were caused by both sources. Therefore, the planned approach is a complete re-plumbing of the building.

Background

In 1991, the water service line from the street to the school was replaced with a lead-free pipe. However, there was a portion of the line that ran under the building, labeled as "loading dock," which was not replaced. This old pipe could be one source of lead, but accessing that pipe would require digging up part of the foundation of the school. While we understand the desire to pinpoint the precise source of the elevated lead levels, digging up a portion of the foundation is too disruptive. Instead, as described below, a bypass procedure will be performed so that water will be fed through an entirely new pipe.

Main Water Service Line

The Newton Department of Public Works will replace the main water service line from the street to the school. The old piping will be cut, capped and abandoned in place. The new piping laid outside will bypass all of the old piping and go directly into the school. With the bypass in place, all drinking water will now be fed through a completely new pipe.

Internal Plumbing Lines

New water lines will be run to all drinking fountains in Burr School. The two drinking fountains in the gym will be removed and not replaced. All new water lines for cold water pipes will be run to the sinks in the classrooms, kitchen, bathrooms, and offices. Some of the old piping from the walls will be removed; some of the joints from these pipes and some of the replaced fixtures will be tested for lead.

Based upon feedback from Burr families, a new electric, on-demand hot water heater will be installed to heat all water going through the cold water pipes to all hot water faucets at all sinks.

Fixtures

All drinking fountains will be replaced with new ADA compliant fixtures. Fountains previously attached to sinks will be completely removed. All sink faucets will be replaced, with the exception of a few replaced very recently.

Follow Up Tests

When the remediation work is finished, the outside agency currently under contract to test water in all of the public schools will test all fountains and faucets throughout the school to ensure the safety of the drinking water. The contractor follows all testing protocols and recommendations of MA DEP, which includes a first draw sample after 6-8 hours of stagnation. Flush samples will also be taken and tested.

Education

Student-friendly signage will be posted above all kitchen and classroom sinks advising all students and staff that drinking water should be accessed from the drinking fountains/bubblers. If necessary, only the cold water faucet should be used for hand washing or food preparation. This message will be communicated to all faculty and staff at Burr Elementary. We hope you will partner with us to educate students to drink water only from the water fountains, as this is best practice as they move through the Newton Public School system.

Communication

The district will work closely with the Burr community to ensure full transparency in the execution of the remediation plan. Bi-monthly progress updates, the remediation plan, pictures of work in progress, and test results will be sent via email and posted to the Burr and NPS websites. Updates will be shared with Burr parents, students, current teachers, and the Burr After Care Program. Alumni of Burr (families at Day Middle School and Newton North High School) will be sent a separate email communication about the recent testing at Burr and will have the option to sign up for additional updates if interested.

Families and community members with questions or feedback can email the school department at water@newton.k12.ma.us. Community members who would like to receive updates should send an email to the address above to be included on all future communications.