# Newsletter Article Example #1: Lead in Drinking Water Information Display

**Headline: <Anytown Elementary School> to Unveil *Lead in Drinking Water* Information Display**

Content:

In recent days, concerns have been raised over the level of lead in the drinking water at <Anytown Elementary School>. In an effort to inform the community of ongoing efforts to protect children in our facility, parents, and concerned community members will soon be invited to visit the school’s new *Lead in Drinking Water* Information Display. Scheduled for introduction on <date>, the display will be located in the main <school/child care> office for easy access. Here, free pamphlets and handouts about lead in drinking water will be available throughout the school day.

In announcing the establishment of this information display, <School Principal/Child Care Administrator <Name of Administrator>> noted, [“The lead levels in <school/child care> drinking water are a growing public concern and we want to be proactive in responding. We’re proud to be taking the initiative in keeping our parents and the community informed. Our *Lead in Drinking Water* Information Display is just the first step in our ongoing campaign of education and awareness.”]

Optional:

[According to <Name of Administrator>, the <school/child care facility> plans to open a second, staffed information center in the school library. This will give parents the opportunity to consult with school administrators and health authorities on lead in drinking water and the most effective ways to reduce exposure.]

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)’s *3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities* was developed to help schools and child care facilities to implement a voluntary program for reducing lead in drinking water. This EPA program is focused on promoting voluntary testing of drinking water for lead, taking corrective action if problems are identified, and sharing testing results and plans for reducing lead exposure in drinking water with parents, staff, students, and the community at large.

Concluded <Name of Administrator>, [“We are responding to the call to action because we believe our children should have confidence in their drinking water while at our facility. Furthermore, we are committed to keeping our parents and the public informed as we work to ensure drinking water quality.”]

# Newsletter Article Example #2: Lead Testing

**Headline: <School/Child Care Facility> Announces Lead Testing**

Content:

The administration of <Anytown Elementary School> has announced that it will be conducting onsite testing of drinking water outlets to check for elevated levels of lead. This <voluntary> testing is being conducted to ensure the health and safety of everyone who uses our facility, including children, parents, and faculty.

<Schools and child care facilities that receive water from a drinking water system are not required by federal regulations to conduct sampling for lead.> The administration of <school/child care facility> has determined that it is in the public’s best interest to take the initiative in dealing with this potential health risk. To that end, following instructions provided in an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance document designed especially for schools and child care facilities, we developed a plan for testing.

Having identified drinking water outlets, testing is scheduled to take place on <time period> using in the EPA’s *3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities* instructions. These samples will then be analyzed by a certified laboratory.

We will share the results of our testing as soon as they are available. A copy of the test results will be posted in our administration office for review by parents, staff, and the general community, as well as on our website.

# Newsletter Article Example #3: Issue of Lead in School Drinking Water

<Anytown Elementary School> has developed plans to assess and, if necessary, reduce lead in our school’s drinking water. We are taking this course of action on a voluntary basis because it is the right thing to do in order to ensure that this school remains a safe environment for our children.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is encouraging <schools/child care facilities > to reduce children’s exposure to lead from school drinking water by taking steps that include: testing drinking water for lead; disseminating results to parents, students, staff, and other interested stakeholders; and taking appropriate and necessary actions to correct problems.

Exposure to lead is a concern because it is a toxic heavy metal that is harmful if inhaled or swallowed. It has a range of adverse health effects, from lowered birth weight and slowed physical and mental development in infants, to lowered IQ levels, impaired hearing, reduced attention span, and poor classroom performance in young children.

Typically, when lead is found in drinking water, it is from leaching from plumbing materials.

EPA’s *3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities* campaign aims to encourage voluntary actions to reduce potential exposure to lead in drinking water through training, testing, and taking action. In response, <Anytown Elementary School> is taking decisive 3Ts action as follows:

* We are launching an education and awareness initiative to provide **training** to school personnel, parents, custodians, and the community at large regarding the risks of lead poisoning and the means of mitigating these risks.
* We are developing a sampling plan so we can conduct **testing** at outlets where students and staff get water for drinking and cooking.
* We are **taking action** to reduce lead in drinking water, as well as communicate to parents, staff, and the larger school community about risks, testing results, and recommended actions.

Schools and child care facilities, like ours, that receive water from a public water system are not required federal regulations to test for levels of lead in onsite drinking water. It is the responsibility of our water system to control the corrosivity of the water in order to reduce the likelihood of lead leaching from plumbing, fixtures, solders, and other materials.

However, individual school plumbing may still leach lead. Therefore, considering increased concern about the possible health effects posed by elevated levels of lead, we are taking the initiative to ensure that drinking water in our school is safe.

[Optional: Recognizing that communication is key, a Lead in Drinking Water Information Display is being set in our main school office. Here, free materials, school handouts and issue updates will be available throughout the day.]

[Optional: We are also in the process of creating a staffed information center in our library, where parents will be able to ask questions, get answers and offer input.] [Optional: The school also has a website dedicated to providing information on lead in drinking water. You can visit the site to learn more about the risks of lead in drinking water and the efforts we are undertaking to protect the school community <school/child care facility 3Ts program website URL>.]

[Optional: Parents, teachers, and members of the broader school community can also follow the school on social media to get updates on the lead in drinking water program. The school will post announcements and upcoming events to the school’s Facebook page to help keep the community informed.]

[Optional: Additionally, we will be scheduling a Lead in Drinking Water Workshop in conjunction with an upcoming <PTA meeting/open house>, so watch for further information about these activities as announcements are sent home with your child.]

If you have any immediate concerns or would like to support our effort as a volunteer, please contact us at <telephone> or <email address>.

Meanwhile, if you are concerned about the level of lead to which your children are exposed from drinking water at home, you can take these precautions:

* **Get your water tested.** Reach out to your water supplier, you can typically find contact information on your water bill, or go to EPA’s website to learn more about testing options and certified laboratories.
* **Use cold water to cook and to prepare baby formula.** Do not cook with or drink water from the hot water tap; lead dissolves more easily into hot water. Do not use water from the hot water tap to make baby formula. Remember, **boiling water DOES NOT remove lead** from water.
* **Regularly clean faucet aerators**. Aerators, the screens at the end of faucets, can collect debris. Rinse out collected materials to reduce debris accumulation.
* **Consider using a water filter certified to remove lead** and know when it’s time to replace the filter.
* **Run your water to flush out lead.** Anytime the water in a particular faucet has not been used for an extended period of time, “flush” your cold-water pipes. The longer water sits in your home piping; the more lead may leach from lead-containing fixtures.
* **Talk to your water supplier about lead service lines.**

Numerous health, security, and educational issues currently compete for our limited resources. It is a great challenge to devote the appropriate attention and find the necessary funding to address all these pressing issues. Furthermore, <voluntary> onsite water testing presents a special challenge because the testing itself may be costly. Should a problem be discovered, fixing it may be even more costly. We will be prioritizing our activities to ensure that we have the necessary resources.

As we move forward, we’ll be turning to a variety of partners for resources and expertise, including our water utility, state drinking water program, local health office, certified area laboratories, and local community organizations.

To date, community wide response to our awareness initiative has been tremendous. As we proceed and develop a specific course of action, we intend to keep parents and the public at large informed every step of the way.

If you have additional questions our lead in drinking water testing program, please feel free to discuss them with me. For further information about lead in drinking water, please write down these toll-free numbers:

* Consumer Information – (800) 424-LEAD
* Safe Drinking Water Hotline – (800) 426-4791
* State Department of Health - < insert phone number>
* Local Department of Health - < insert phone number>

On behalf of the administration of <Anytown Elementary School>, many thanks for your involvement and support.