

Purchase College Water Quality History – December 2018

2016 Water Quality Program Activity

In 2016, the PSGA Green Fee Committee (GFC) funded a test of eight water fountains in the Library and seven water fountains in the Natural Sciences building. Results of the test indicated lead and copper levels above the EPA K-12 guidelines in two library fountains. Water quality in other Library and all Natural Science water fountains was acceptable. The four non-compliant water fountains were turned off.

Following the initial sample results, Facilities Management decided to test point of use water locations (water fountains/kitchen faucets) in residences, Children's Center, the Gym, Museum, PAC and other academic buildings. A total of 88 point of use locations were tested. The water was tested for lead, copper and coliform (bacteria). Nine locations were positive for elevated copper and seven locations were positive for lead. The Children's Center had no elevated levels. Subsequent to testing, all non-compliant fountains and taps were removed from service.

A second test of water was conducted on 8/18/16 to determine effectiveness of remediation. In addition, tests were conducted in four mechanical rooms. Tests revealed that two of the mechanical room locations tested positive for lead; however, these are not point of use locations. All other locations were treated effectively by filters or were turned off. There were no points of use that showed contamination at that time.

On August 20, 2016, all fire hydrants on campus and select taps in buildings were flushed in an effort to refresh the campus water supply. A program began on August 30, 2016 to flush nine selected fire hydrants every other week until chlorine levels reached an acceptable level. On November 3, 2016, this was reduced to once a month. On February 22, 2017, this program was expanded to include one additional fire hydrant. Hydrant flushing continues on a monthly basis weather permitting (flushing during sub-freezing weather would lead to unsafe ice accumulation).

2017 Water Quality Program Activity

The College decided to expand the testing in 2017 to include all potable water sources on campus. This included water fountains, and kitchen and bathroom sinks. Tests were performed for coliform (bacteria), lead and copper. Sampling began on February 23, 2017 and concluded on May 31, 2017. Following the testing protocol, we found no coliform present. Of the 2,000 samples taken, 12% resulted in levels of copper and/or lead above the EPA action level. Residential locations and other kitchen sinks found to have lead or copper levels above the EPA action level had filters installed and remained in service. Non-compliant sinks in other areas have signs posted designating them as non-potable.

Hydration Stations

In December 2015, the PSGA Green Fee Committee purchased two filtered hydration stations. In 2016, the College expanded this effort by purchasing and installing twenty-one additional filtered hydration stations across campus.

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Current Program

In July 2018, Facilities Management implemented the Water Sampling Program and testing of approximately 100 drinking water locations per year for lead and copper. Thirty-seven locations were tested in July-August 2018. Three bathroom sinks in Big Haus had levels above the current EPA Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) action level, one for lead, one for copper, and one for both. As an added precaution, the College is voluntarily adhering to the action levels indicated in the LCR having installed filters on these sinks.

Additional sampling is planned for Winter Break 2018-19.

Campus Water Study

Capital Facilities Planning (CFP) has retained MJ Engineering to conduct a study of the water distribution system on campus. Additional information regarding this study is on the CFP website at <https://www.purchase.edu/live/news/3236-campus-water-study>.

Reference Document Links

Water Sampling Program

Hydration Station Locations Map