

Tarago Public School

Works update

12 March 2020

Dear parents/carers,

As previously advised, the Department of Education is aware of lead contamination concerns in relation to Transport for NSW rail works underway in the vicinity of Tarago Public School.

We acknowledge that even the smallest traces of hazardous materials or substances can be an unsettling experience for our school communities. Our role is to be vigilant across all our schools and to understand how these events can affect people, while ensuring students, staff and parents have the information they need to feel safe at school

Transport for NSW has undertaken sampling of soil and dust at Tarago PS and the results have subsequently been shared with the Department. Results of these tests confirmed the risk of exposure to lead to be low and acceptable.

The Department has undertaken additional sampling of air, soil, water and dust at the school, by an independent hygienist.

Internal air monitoring results have confirmed air at the school is within safe levels and the independent hygienist has confirmed the school can be used by staff and students in the normal way.

Swab test results have confirmed there is no presence of lead dust on surfaces at occupant height (i.e. below 1.8 metres). While elevated levels of lead were returned from samples taken above 1.8 metres, the air monitoring results were all below the acceptable limit. Based on these results, the hygienist has advised there is minimal lead exposure risk to staff and students. As a precaution, an environmental clean will be undertaken at the school.

Soil sampling within play areas at the school have confirmed the exposure to lead is low. A small number of samples collected at other areas of the school have returned elevated levels of lead. These areas will be isolated until appropriate remediation has been undertaken.

As a result of a faulty filtration system, students and staff at Tarago Public School have been using bottled water since Term 4 2019. As a precaution, the use of bottled water will continue until advice from NSW Health and further testing confirms the school can resume using its own water supply. Until that time, water has been capped off to all bubblers at the school to avoid accidental use.

The department is committed to ensuring the health and safety of students, staff and residents in the Tarago area and will continue keep local residents and the school community informed.

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