

Tarago Public School

Works update

8 April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Further to our previous advice below, we can confirm that all actions identified by the independent hygienist's investigation have been actioned and the school grounds have been managed to ensure the safety of students and staff.

As a result of additional sampling, the independent hygienist advised there were three areas to address in some locations, as a precaution: water; dust; and soil.

Water

We confirm that drinking water is now supplied by bottled water and the school grounds are being watered from the bore which has been tested and passed. As an extra precaution, water has been capped off to all bubblers at the school to avoid accidental use.

Dust

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 are consistent with normal air quality. Based on these results, the hygienist has advised there is minimal lead exposure risk to staff and students.

As a precaution, the school has undergone an environmental clean and has been given a clearance certificate for dust levels by an independent hygienist confirming students and staff can return to school. An environmental clean of Block I (the ex-teacher's residence) will be completed over the holiday period.

Soil

In terms of soil, samples were taken from 17 locations across the school, including the soil under building windows and from the sports field. The test results returned concentrations above acceptable limits in four locations: under the windows of Block I (the ex-teacher's residence) under the windows of Building D; and two locations under the Library windows (Block C). One location under Building A was also found to be approaching acceptable limits.

The soil from the four locations will be removed, replaced and regrassed over the holiday period. Access to the affected soil areas has been restricted until the work is completed.

Please be assured that we are taking every precaution to maintain the safety of students and staff at the school. For more information please contact School Infrastructure using the details below.

For more information contact:

School Infrastructure NSW

Email: schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au

Phone: 1300 482 651

www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au

Notification previously distributed 13 March 2020

Dear Parents and 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.

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 are consistent with normal air quality. 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 over the weekend.

Soil sampling within play areas, including the sandpit, equipment area and the sports oval 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 are being isolated until appropriate remediation has been undertaken.

Students and staff at Tarago Public School have had access to a new filtered water system since August 2019. Since being made aware of elevated levels of lead in the vicinity of the school, students have been using bottled water. 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 to keep local residents and the school community informed.

For more information please contact School Infrastructure using the details below.