United States
Environmental Protection Agency | Office of Water 4601 | EPA 810/F-90-021
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EPA FACT SHEET: LEAD IN DRINKING WATER COOLERS

Protecting the nation's children from exposure to lead from school drinking water coolers is the primary goal of the Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA), which was signed into law on October 31, 1988. EPA recommends that drinking water outlets--especially water coolers--in schools be tested to ensure that lead levels in the water are below 20 parts per billion.

This fact sheet will help school administrators address the problem of school water coolers that contain lead. It reflects current information as of February 1990. The information on the accompanying list will be updated periodically.

How To Identify Problems

First, identify which water coolers contain lead components; follow these steps as a minimum protocol.

- Inventory each cooler and note its brand, model, serial number, and year.
- Check the accompanying list to identify any coolers that are not lead free.
- Sample water from all outlets where lead contamination is most likely, especially coolers that are not lead free and those with lead-lined tanks. However, even coolers that are "lead free" may have high lead levels in their water due to other sources in the plumbing system and should be tested. Follow the sampling and testing protocols in the EPA booklet *Lead in Schools Drinking Water*. (See the box below, right.)
- Contact your State agency responsible for the LCCA program (see box below, right) for information and assistance on testing your water samples. Water samples should be sent only to certified laboratories that use the EPA-approved Graphite Furnace Atomic Absorption (AA) method. In some cases, the local water supplier, local or State department of health or environment, or the lab will collect and analyze the samples. In most cases, the lab will provide containers and instructions for collection. The charge for lab tests ranges from $7 to $30 per sample. In some States or localities, there may be funding available for testing.

What To Do If Problems Are Found

If the lead level of any fountain or outlet exceeds 20 parts per billion (ppb), take immediate action to reduce the level of contamination. Flushing outlets on a daily basis before school begins may sufficiently reduce exposures, especially if the problem is localized to a few outlets in a building. However, daily flushing may not be practical for water coolers.

Take **follow-up** samples from any outlet with lead levels above 20 ppb to pinpoint the source of the problem. Make sure to follow the instructions in the EPA booklet *Lead In School Drinking Water*. If you find a cooler to be the source of the lead, contact the distributor or manufacturer to determine how the problem may be corrected. If a cooler that is not lead free is responsible for high lead levels, removal may be necessary. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has the responsibility to issue an order to require manufacturers and importers to repair, replace or recall water coolers identified by EPA has having lead-lined tanks. Contact the CPSC Hotline (800/638-2772) to determine the status of their actions.

For More Information

Contact the State office listed below for information on identifying and correcting lead in drinking water problems. Contact the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800/426-4791 for other information and for the booklet *Lead In Schools Drinking Water*.

Water Coolers With Lead-Lined Tanks

The following list of model numbers represents all of the drinking water coolers with lead-lined tanks that have been identified to date. The models listed here were selected because one or more of the units in that model series have been tested and found to have lead-lined tanks. These six models are made by the Halsey Taylor Company.

WM 8A	GC 10ACR	GC 5A
WT 8A	GC 10A	RWM 13A

Other Water Coolers Containing Lead

EBCO Manufacturing Company

EBCO has identified all pressure bubbler water coolers with shipping dates from 1962 through 1977 as having a bubbler valve containing lead, as defined by the LCCA. The units contain a single 50-50 tin-lead solder joint on the bubbler valve. Model numbers for those coolers in this category were not available.

The following EBCO models of pressure bubbler coolers produced from 1978 through 1981 contain one 50-50 tin-lead solder joint each:

CP3	DP7SM	DPM8H
CP10-50	DP10F	DP16M
DP20-50	CP3H	DP7S
DP13A	13P	DP7WM
DP7M	DP3RH	EP10F
DP13M-60	DP14A-50/60	CP10
CP5M	DP12N	DP20
DP14S	DPM8	DP8AH
DP5F	DP15M	C10E
CP3-50	DP5S	DP5M
7P	DP13SM	DP13M
DP3R	EP5F	CP3M
DP13A-50	CP5	DP13S
PX-10	13PL	DP7WMD
DP7MH	DP8A	WTC10
DP14M	DP10X	
DP15MW	DP15W	

Pressure bubbler water coolers manufactured by EBCO and marketed under the "Oasis" and "Kelvinator" brand names with the identified model numbers have been distributed in the U.S. In addition, EBCO indicated that "Aquarius" pressure bubbler water coolers are manufactured for distribution in foreign countries, including Canada. Although unlikely, it is conceivable that an "Aquarius" cooler with one of the model numbers listed above could have been transported into the U.S.

Halsey Taylor Company

Halsey Taylor reports using lead solder in these models of water cooler manufactured between 1978 and the last week of 1987.

WMA-I	SCWT/SCWT-A
SWA-I	DC/DHC-1
S3/5/10 D	BFC-4F/7F/4FS/7FS
S300/500/1000D	

In addition to these Halsey Taylor models, Halsey Taylor indicates that the following Haws brand coolers manufactured for Haws by Halsey Taylor from November 1984 through December 18, 1987, are not lead free because they contain two tin-lead solder joints. The model designations for these coolers are:

HC8WT	HC14W	HCBF7D
HC8WTH	HC4F	HCBF7HO
HC14WT	HC4FH	HWC7
HC14WTH	HC8F	HWC7D
HC14WL	HC8FH	HC2F
HC16WT	HC14F	HC2FH
HC4W	HC14FH	HC5F
HC6W	HC14FL	HC10F
HC8W	HCBF7	

Note: A number of water coolers have been deleted from the proposed list identifying them as not lead free. For information about these water coolers and others, refer to the January 18, 1990 Federal Register notice.