Template for Copper Results over the Action Level

(NOTE: This is a sample letter to students, families, and staff from a school or early education or child care facility with laboratory results that exceed the Action Level for copper in drinking water. Delete or replace all items in red including this paragraph and add your school letterhead here.)

(Insert date)

To the Students, Families, and Staff of ***(insert school/early education or child care facility name)***:

During recent sampling for lead and copper, some water taps at our school had copper levels that exceed the Massachusetts and federal Action Level for copper in drinking water at schools and early education and child care facilities. See sample results below. The Action Level for copper in drinking water is 1.3 milligrams per liter (also known as parts per million).

We would like to inform you about our plans to reduce potential exposure to copper in drinking water at our school. Copper is not believed to be in our water source but plumbing and fixtures in our buildings may contain copper, resulting in an increase in the copper content in tap water.

Sampling Results		
Date Sample Collected	**Location**	**Copper results in mg/L**

Copper is a necessary micronutrient and is needed in small “trace” amounts for good health but too much copper in the diet or in drinking water may cause adverse health effects. Some people who consume drinking water with copper in excess of the EPA action level may experience nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramps. However, most people are unlikely to experience health problems from exposure to modestly elevated copper levels in drinking water because the human body has a natural mechanism for maintaining the proper level of copper in it. People with Wilson's disease, children less than one year old, and individuals with liver disease cannot eliminate excess copper from their bodies as well and are more likely to experience negative health effects on the liver and kidney from short-term exposure to copper levels that exceed the EPA’s action level. See the MassDEP Fact Sheet on copper and your health at http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/water/drinking/alpha/a-thru-h/copperfs.pdf

The administration takes these results very seriously and is moving immediately to safeguard the health of the students, faculty and staff. The following information describes steps we are taking to address the issue of copper in the water.

To safeguard our students and other sensitive individuals (including woman who are pregnant or nursing), our school is working closely and cooperatively with MassDEP and others and taking actions as follows:

Only include applicable items

What we are doing:

1. While exceeding the Action Level does not require provision of alternative drinking water sources, beginning XXXX we will be /are providing bottled water and will be shutting down all bubblers.
2. We have removed from service all taps with copper levels over the Action Level.
3. We are implementing a public information process that will include distribution of outreach material to all students, parents, teachers, staff and local officials.
4. We have developed a sampling plan to conduct testing at outlets (faucets, water fountains, etc.) where students and staff get water for drinking, beverage preparation and cooking.
5. We are implementing a flushing and water usage plan to safeguard against copper exposure from drinking water in the school at outlets that are found to be above the Action Level for copper. This includes the daily flushing of water fountains and/or faucets at sinks and the limitation of water consumption to cold-water faucets for food and beverage preparation.
6. We will undertake efforts to determine the cause of this copper Action Level exceedance and evaluate the adequacy of our existing corrosion control system. We will develop and put into place a corrective action plan as quickly as possible following additional testing and consultation.
7. Through periodic reports, we will keep you informed as to the progress of our efforts. These reports will serve to let you know what has been done and what is being done to safeguard against copper exposure from drinking water at our school(s)/child care facility (ies).
8. *Optional information can be included that announces an information display at the school on Copper in Drinking Water at Schools and/or an announcement about a workshop that will provide further information and will provide an opportunity for Q&A.*

A Reminder*:* The water system at the school is not unlike water systems found in other buildings. Older plumbing systems and fixtures, especially, can contain lead pipes or solder that can allow lead to enter tap water. Plumbing systems also contain copper. If you have questions about lead or copper in your home's water supply, and are using a private well, you can have your water tested. If you are receiving water from a public water system (i.e., if you pay a water bill)

you can call your local water department for information or check the Consumer Confidence Report sent out by the public water supplier annually.

If you have any questions on this information please contact _____ at _____.

Sincerely,

(Insert signature and title)

Modified from EPA's "3T's for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools: Revised Technical Guidance