

To: ANC1E, SMD1E01, Commissioner Bradley Gallagher
From: The Department of General Services (DGS)
Date: February 15, 2023
Subject: Park View Recreation Center: Environmental Safety Testing Result Notification

Commissioner Gallagher:

The Department of General Services (DGS) takes our commitment to maintaining the health and safety of our residents seriously. One of our responsibilities is executing the Public Facilities Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020, which requires DGS to conduct proactive, routine lead testing of public recreation space with synthetic surfaces, including playgrounds. We write to you today about lead test results and related remediation from a recreation center playground in your Single Member District.

During routine testing at the Park View Recreation Center, the playground area closest to Warder St NW with outdoor workout structures on it was found to have actionable lead test results on the synthetic turf. As the Amendment Act requires, the site was closed at the end of the school day on February 15, which is within 24 hours of receipt of the sample analysis. Remediation is planned to take place the evening of February 15. Once post-remediation test results are received and show lead levels below the 400ppm threshold, the playground will be reopened.

Note: Tests of the other two playground areas at Park View Recreation Center produced results below actionable threshold levels and do not require remediation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where did the lead come from? The positive test result from the rinsed dust analysis (rinsate) means that the source of the lead on the synthetic surface is likely from the surrounding environment, not the playground itself. For example, when it rains, a wide range of external chemicals may wash onto a playground surface, including from cars, lead-based paint, nearby construction, and other sources. It may then settle below the surface of the synthetic playground. It is important to remember that this means playground users would not be exposed to lead by touching the surface itself.

How did you test for lead at the playground? On-site evaluations included the following:

- XRF samples: Lead screening with X-Ray Fluorescence on site
- Bulk samples: Lead screening by washing bulk rubber samples from the playgrounds, separating the rinsate (i.e., bulk wash water) from the cleaned bulk playground material to evaluate the playground material separately from external chemicals. Only the bulk rinsate samples showed lead levels above the allowable threshold.
- Wipe samples: Lead screening at the surface to identify lead contained in the surface that could transfer onto a playground user's hands, clothes, shoes, etc.

How will it be fixed? Out of an abundance of caution, DGS and its vendor will pressure wash and HEPA vacuum the playground surface using a Trisodium Phosphate (TSP) solution. Because the tests indicated lead was in the bulk rinsate and not in the synthetic material itself, playground users would not be exposed to lead by touching the surface material. Once the playground is dry, we will retest it. If the remediation produces satisfactory test results, the playground will be reopened.

What are the next steps? In accordance with the Public Facilities Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020, DGS will share environmental safety testing results with the community, including details about the environmental risks found, testing results and threshold levels for each risk, and remediation actions conducted at Park View Recreation Center. We would like to share that information during the next ANC1E meeting and will reach out to you to schedule.

We appreciate your time and understanding of the work that we are doing to maintain the health and safety of those who use the playground at Park View Recreation Center. If you have questions, please contact Mike McLaughlin, DGS External Affairs at Michael.mclaughlin@dc.gov.