

## All-Clear on Lead Levels in School Water

by Doug McClure

**HARDWICK** — Now tests for lead in drinking water, performed on September 1, should both be a sigh of relief for concerned parents and a warning for testing protocols.

Hazen Usonic's water passed with an average reading of 1.2 to 2 parts per billion (ppb). The water at Hardwick Elementary School (HES) averaged 4 ppb — with one exception, according to Orleans South Supervisory Union (OSSU) Facility Director Jeff Lecours. The level where the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends a 2, however, they emphasize, the only safe number is zero.

When an exception was a drinking fountain at HES, which was at 158 ppb. Lecours believes the elevated result is due to the same problem that caused a single test performed over the summer yielded the initial high lead test: un-aerated water and low flow. The fountain is now out of service and other drinking fountains are being re-tested, according to Lecours.

Having a municipal water system that is safe does not guarantee that the water in schools that draw from that municipal system is safe. "As part of the program, our environmental engineers, an engineering and laboratory staff assist schools with their voluntary water testing, including recommendations for where and when to conduct testing. Through the Clean Water Act, the department continues to work with the school once our Lab test results come back," says Lori O'Leary of the Department of Health.

"I got yelled at and it was a little terrifying to think I almost drank that," he said. "I will think twice now before drinking from the school fountain," he said. "It doesn't matter that the new test results showed very low lead levels. On that day, we would have drunk water that no one knew for certain was safe."

Lecours says that while he didn't expect the second round of tests to harbor surprising results, he supports more widespread testing, such as what the Department of Health (DOH) is piloting this fall. While no decisions have been made which schools will be selected according to the DOH, "if anything, we're ahead of the curve now," according to Lecours.

The DOH says at this point there is "not necessarily one process" for testing. A school can opt to use a private lab, an OSSU did this in 2016. The school can use the state survey or be informed by the lab of the results. The school can submit a sample to the state for testing, as was done in the very first test at Hardwick Elementary School, or the school can participate in the Evaluation Program. A DOH pilot program designed to focus on eliminating health threats in schools.

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**WEST GLOVER** — At some point during the night of September 7, vandals defaced a hay storage barn at Andersonville Farm, in West Glover. The vandals left graffiti on the barn and destroyed property.

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The Woodbury Village Store is for sale.

## Woodbury Village Store for Sale, Will Stay Open Until Sold

by Will Waters

**WOODBURY** — The Woodbury Village Store is up for sale, but will remain open for business until it is sold.

Jessica Waters and Zack Kirkpatrick have owned and operated the store since April 29, 2016. "We are not closing," said Waters, who said there have been many people who believed the store was closing for business. "That has been very frustrating for her."

According to Waters, the reason for selling is mostly because her husband, Kirkpatrick, has Lyme disease and it is getting worse. According to the Mayo Clinic, the disease can cause extreme fatigue and joint pain.

Waters said they prefer to stay open for a buyer. "That's our plan, but we can't make a firm plan with how long it will take."

While the store is on the market, they will operate it as the market predicts, but may reduce hours after Columbus Day. "It really just depends," she said.

Waters said they initially planned for her to work at the store and have something outside of it to do while Kirkpatrick supervised staff during her away time. They did not plan for her to be involved with the operation of the store because of his Lyme disease. "Originally, he wasn't supposed to work, but to stay upstairs and heal... that never happened."

She said staffing has been an ongoing problem and the store's previous owners of 35 years told her it is a problem that persists regularly.

The store has had improvements made since they acquired it. Waters said the new improvements will make it easier for new owners. She said she and her husband have built up the store and "the next person doesn't have to worry about those things. We built it up and it's here for the next person."

"I want everybody to think this is their store," said Waters, "I know lots of people and what they drink and what they eat. I own about this community."

## Equifax Breach Affects 240,000 Vermonters

by Doug McClure

**ATLANTA, GA** — Equifax issued a release on September 7, 2017, that its retail databases had been compromised. These are the databases that contain information about 143 million people's credit reports.

"Social Security numbers, birth dates, addresses and, in some instances, driver's license numbers have been taken," in addition, credit card numbers for approximately 200,000 U.S. consumers, but not certain dispute documents with personal identifying information for approximately 182,000 U.S. consumers, were accessed," the release states.

It adds "This is clearly a heart-breaking event for our company and one that strikes at the heart of who we are and what we do. I apologize to consumers and our business customers for the concern. See [EQUIFAX Page Five](#)."

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## Nazi Graffiti on West Glover Farm Barn

Nazi Graffiti appeared overnight at Andersonville Farm, in West Glover. Mateo Kehler of Jasper Hill Farm left an effort to raise a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrator.

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