

For Immediate Release

For Information Contact:

Alexis Bozza
973-326-6867
abozza@smcmua.org

**THE SOUTHEAST MORRIS COUNTY MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY
CONDUCTED OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR LEAD MONITORING AND
WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS AND CHILDCARE CENTERS**

(Cedar Knolls, NJ) — The Southeast Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority (SMCMUA) recently served the community by conducting six (6) outreach sessions in March and April of 2016 regarding lead monitoring and water quality management in schools and childcare centers. The sessions were open to representatives from local public and private K-12 schools and pre-K and childcare centers and local health officials.

The outreach sessions were held at SMCMUA's Headquarters in Cedar Knolls. The focus of the outreach program was to highlight two US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) voluntary guidance documents developed for schools and childcare centers, including: "Best Management Practices (BMP) for Drinking Water Quality in Schools and Childcare Facilities Served by Municipal Water Systems" and the "3Ts Program for Reducing Lead in Schools". The three (3) Ts stand for training, testing and telling.

The outreach sessions were prompted by the recent attention on lead in drinking water and particularly in sources that affect the vulnerable populations such as children. SMCMUA viewed the outreach program as a unique opportunity to discuss water quality in schools - beyond lead - to include overall water quality as outlined in the BMP guidance document. The sessions were informative for both the participants and SMCMUA staff.

On May 2, 2016, Governor Christie directed the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) to address concerns about elevated lead levels in school water systems by strengthening regulations that already require the provision of safe drinking water to mandate lead hazard water testing in schools. The new mandate will apply to approximately 3,000 facilities beginning in the next school year. The DOE will work with the USEPA to determine scientifically appropriate protocols to advise schools of how the testing should be performed, according to their particular needs. The Governor called on the legislature to include an additional \$10 million to his proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget to support the plan.

SMCMUA was established in December of 1976. SMCMUA provides drinking water to approximately 66,000 people in Morris County. The SMCMUA creating municipalities include the Town of Morristown, the Township of Morris, the Township of Hanover and the Borough of Morris Plains. For more information about SMCMUA, visit www.smcmua.org where additional information on SMCMUA's lead and copper monitoring program and other useful links on lead can be found under the "Information on Lead" tab.