Environmental Advocates NY

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Lead-Free Parks

A.3098-A (Burdick, et al.)

Explanation:
There is no safe level of lead in drinking water, with even low levels linked to neurological damage, impaired hearing, slowed growth, and anemia. To identify risks to kids from harmful lead exposure, this legislation requires testing of lead in drinking water at New York's state and local parks outside of New York City. With young children at highest risk of life-long damage from this neurotoxin, New York State must take steps to ensure its parks are lead-free.

In 2019, the New York City (NYC) Parks Department conducted testing of water fountains at city parks and discovered widespread contamination. Over 600 water fountains across hundreds of NYC parks detected above 5 parts per billion (ppb) of lead, New York State's current action level for lead in school drinking water. Given that many parkgoers are school-aged, these lead levels pose significant risk of harm to kids' health.

Families outside of New York City deserve to know whether their lead contamination poses a risk to their parks' drinking water as well. Under this legislation, all state and local parks outside of New York City must test for lead in drinking water at least once every three years and provide alternative supplies of safe water wherever the lead action level, set at 5 ppb, is exceeded. This will ensure that when anyone turns on a water fountain at New York's parks, they can feel confident that the water that comes out is clean and safe to drink.

Summary:
The bill amends Section 1110 of the Public Health Law to require testing for lead in drinking water at New York's state and local parks outside of New York City.