

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Eric E. Whitaker, M.D., M.P.H., Director

4302 North Main Street • Rockford, Illinois 61103-5202 • www.idph.state.il.us

December 2, 2004

#112060001

Mike Lawler
Fulton Elementary School
1301 7th Ave
Fulton, IL 61252

Dear Mr. Lawler:

At the request of the Whiteside County Health Department, the Illinois Department of Public Health conducted a limited indoor air investigation at the Fulton Elementary School on November 30, 2004. The investigation was conducted by Steve Johnson of our Rockford Regional Office. Yourself, Arnie and Krista Morthland (from the Whiteside County Health Department) were present during the investigation. In addition to a visual inspection for mold, several carbon dioxide measurements were taken.

No mold was observed during the investigation.

Several carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels were taken with a Q-Trak Indoor Air Quality Monitor. Carbon monoxide was also monitored for during our investigation and none was detected.

Carbon dioxide is a normal constituent of exhaled breath and is commonly used as a screening tool to evaluate whether adequate volumes of fresh outdoor air are being introduced into a building. The outdoor concentration of CO₂ ranges between 350 - 450 parts per million (ppm). If indoor levels are more than 1,000 ppm, there is probably inadequate ventilation; and complaints such as headaches, fatigue, eye and throat irritation may be prevalent. The CO₂ itself is not responsible for the complaints. High levels of CO₂ may indicate the presence of other contaminants in the building that could be responsible for occupant complaints. The levels of CO₂ detected in the open areas of the school ranged from 965 to 988 ppm. Two classrooms (both occupied) were also monitored. In the first classroom the ventilation unit was operating and the level of CO₂ was 913 ppm. In the other classroom the ventilation unit had been turned off and the level of CO₂ was 1,960 ppm.

Recommendations

- The ventilation units in the classrooms should not be turned off. As you can see from our CO₂ measurements, these units provide necessary fresh air. If the units are being turned off because of noisy motors or fans then the units should be repaired.
- It was noted during our investigation that you now have an indoor air quality action plan. This plan addressed many of the recommendations we made in December 2000 and appears to have made a difference in the schools air quality. We recommend that you continue to use the plan and modify it as necessary to address future needs.

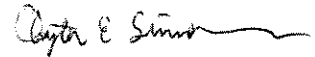
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- Until replaced, the remaining carpets in the classrooms should be vacuumed on a regular basis. Some studies indicate that poorly maintained carpets can release significant quantities of particles into the air during the course of daily activity.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Rockford Regional Office at 4302 North Main Street, Rockford Illinois 61103, telephone 815/987-7511.

Sincerely,



Clayton E. Simonson, L.E.H.P.
Acting Regional Supervisor

SJ:sj

cc - Central Office
- Rockford Regional Office
- Krista Morthland, Whiteside County Health Department

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