



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

3523

Procedure No.

May 27, 2003

Date

- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide mandatory procedures that must be followed to resolve environmental issues in schools and administrative office buildings.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** As part of ongoing efforts to provide a safe and healthy learning and work environment, the school system established a Maintenance Department Environmental Office to oversee environmental issues such as asbestos, lead, mold, air quality, and water quality. In order to effectively and consistently deal with these issues, all environmental concerns must be under the direct control of the Environmental Office. Therefore, all building environmental issues must be handled in accordance with this Administrative Procedure.

III. **DEFINITIONS:**

Environmental Assessment -- Any activity performed within or around a building to determine water or air quality, asbestos levels, lead content, and presence of potentially irritating or harmful substances such as fuel emissions, mold spores, and carbon dioxide. This may consist of, but is not limited to, a visual inspection and specific testing.

- IV. **INFORMATION:** Regulations require routine building inspections for asbestos and water testing for buildings using well water. The Environmental Office may authorize additional environmental assessments using approved contractors, if necessary, to ensure a safe environment for students and staff.

To ensure that requests regarding environmental issues are properly processed, a work request form, detailing the specific concern(s) must be submitted to the Maintenance Department. Appropriate staff will conduct an initial inspection of the facility to determine what actions are necessary. To ensure that each facility maintains a safe and healthy environment, observed deficiencies will be addressed accordingly. This may include equipment repair, improved housecleaning practices and additional testing. The school system maintains an annual contract with an independent, certified consultant to conduct environmental testing; and that firm has the responsibility of disseminating the results, interpreting the data and providing a list of corrective measures that may be warranted. Therefore, the use of private contractors by building staff shall not be allowed unless specifically authorized by the Environmental Office.

The Maintenance Department has assigned a Facilities Coordinator to each facility; this staff person is the first point of contact for any environmental concerns.



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The following are the types of testing currently administered by the Environmental Office:

A. WATER TESTING:

1. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) supplies water service to the majority of our facilities. If concerns are expressed relative to the water quality of a facility serviced by the WSSC, the Environmental Office will evaluate such and, if warranted, arrange for the provider to conduct water quality testing. The associated analytical report information will be provided to the building administrator.
2. WELLS:
 - a. **BACTERIA:** Well water is tested quarterly for the presence of bacteria (fecal and total coliform) as mandated by Maryland State Law. Copies of the written analytical reports are mailed to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).
 - b. **COPPER AND LEAD:** Well water is also tested for copper and lead contents. The frequency rate of the test depends on the results obtained, and copies of the written analytical reports are mailed to MDE.
3. OTHER WATER CONCERNS: Environmental Office personnel investigate other water quality concerns, such as unusual odors or coloration. Where action is warranted, the water source provider tests the water and provides a copy of the analytical report to the school system.

B. ASBESTOS:

1. Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 40 Part 763, mandates asbestos reinspections of all facilities every three years by inspectors assigned to the Environmental Office. Inspections are performed in one-third of the school systems' buildings each year, and Asbestos Management Plans are updated accordingly. Asbestos Management Plans for each building are available to the public.
2. In accordance with all required regulations, all activities requiring asbestos abatement are completed by individuals specifically qualified to perform



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such work. The building staff and appropriate parents and guardians are notified accordingly.

C. INDOOR AIR QUALITY TESTING:

1. **EQUIPMENT-RELATED ISSUES:** In order to provide the proper air quality, all equipment must be functioning and thermostats properly set. Equipment that is not working properly should be reported to the custodial staff and, if required, a work order repair request should be processed, relative to the need. The proper thermostat settings are listed in Bulletin S-46-96; or locate the Maintenance Department web page on the Prince George's County Schools web site. Click on "Maintenance Department Publications and Procedures" and then click on "Energy Conservation Guidelines".
2. **UNUSUAL FUMES OR ODORS:** Unusual and/or irritating fumes should be reported immediately to the Building Supervisor, who will notify the Department Head or Principal. Staff and students should be temporarily relocated out of the area of concern while it is being investigated.

D. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

MOLD: Visual mold growth should be reported to the Building Supervisor, who will investigate its cause and notify the Department Head or Principal. Depending on the severity of the condition, the Department Head or Principal may refer the issue to the Environmental Office who will perform an inspection and determine what steps are necessary to resolve the problem. Steps may include maintenance and/or repair of equipment and cleaning, treating, or sealing surfaces. Environmental Office staff may enlist the contracted vendor to perform additional tests and/or make recommendations.

- V. **PROCEDURES:** The following procedures should be used in initiating environmental testing in any school system building. Students, staff, or parents should report initial concerns to the Department Head or Principal, who will notify the Building Supervisor. The Building Supervisor is to make the preliminary inspection of the area of concern and notify the Department Head or Principal.

A. Initiating a Request: Department Head or Principal.

1. Determine what type of environmental concern needs to be addressed and



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process accordingly on the proper work order request form, in accordance with the normal Maintenance Department procedures.

2. Provide as much information as possible to facilitate the repair in an expeditious manner.
3. **Submit Request:** Submit the original to the Facilities Coordinator assigned to your building.
4. If the environmental concern poses a potential health concern, the Department Head or Principal will notify staff and students in writing of the concern and give updates in writing of any actions taken to address the situation.
5. Cases of a more urgent nature should be telephoned to the Maintenance Department. The building staff should provide as much information as possible in order to ensure that the concern is properly addressed.

B. Approval: The Director of Maintenance will approve the project.

- VI. **RELATED PROCEDURES:** Administrative Procedure 2803, Hazard Communication Program; Administrative Procedure 3522, Requesting Building Alterations and Improvements; Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 40 Part 763; and Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) §26.02.02.03-3.
- VII. **MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES:** This Administrative Procedure will be reviewed periodically by the Director of Maintenance and updates will be made as necessary.
- VIII. **CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDES:** None. This is a new Administrative Procedure.
- IX. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** May 27, 2003.

Approved by:
Iris T. Metts
Chief Executive Officer

Distribution: Lists 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11