Malibu High School
Environmental Update

In an effort to continue the flow of information related to the environmental program at Malibu High School, SMMUSD will provide updates as needed to ensure accurate information is being released to the community.

Currently, there are more questions about the health of the school, what areas of the campus are closed, and a desire for more information are next steps.

- Per the EPA, Malibu High School is a safe environment for students. Both federal and state agencies have been working in collaboration with the District to ensure all laws and regulations are being followed.

- The District is still addressing environmental testing in one classroom at MHS (the Woodworking Room) and one office at JCES (the therapist's office). Room 303, the Band Room, is open. There was some confusion because initial PCB tests had indicated elevated PCB levels. However, once the wall and flooring was restored after the risers were moved, and the room was cleaned, air and surface wipe samples returned with levels that were within the EPA's health standards.

- The School has not yet opened a portion of the grassy area outside Building G – the woodworking room. Initial soil test results showed PCBs present, and additional soil testing was conducted. Once results are received and reviewed the District and DTSC will evaluate whether remediation should be conducted.

- Some parents have asked what advice they can give their children

to ensure they don't enter an area of environmental concern. The EPA and DTSC recommend the following:
- Ensure all students adhere to precautionary signage in the two rooms and one outside area that remain closed.
- Remind students to wash their hands frequently. This guidance is a benefit with regard to all health discussions, including the flu and colds. The standard is also relevant regarding soil and dust in and around any building – schools, libraries, hospitals, etc.

- With regard to statements made at a Malibu City Council meeting by a cleaning company hired by the District to assist with non-BMP cleaning, unfortunately this is a case where a company was hired, but was fired when the cleaning was inadequate.
- His team used excessive water when cleaning the carpets, without using a proper extraction machine, causing an odor. He did not re-clean the carpets; they were ultimately re-cleaned by District staff. He was released from work.
- After being released from the job, the business owner sent an email to the District expressing his displeasure at the state of the classrooms they were asked to clean.

- Some stakeholders are requesting additional testing of the caulk in our schools. While we appreciate the intent, the EPA has provided very clear guidance about our testing program. After seeing the results of our summer environmental testing program, the EPA has been clear that they do NOT recommend further testing.

MOVING FORWARD: While the testing program conducted over the summer ensured our MHS and JCES buildings are safe, SMMUSD is focused on ensuring our classrooms remain environmentally clean to protect the health and safety of our students and staff.

Additional data will be collected around the school's winter break in the 2014-15 school year, and at the end of the 2015 school year, prior to the next annual summer cleaning. These data, along with data from this summer, will aid in determining future monitoring recommendations.

The District has committed to remove caulk identified above regulatory thresholds and light fixtures previously found to contain PCBs, even though dust and air samples have not indicated a health risk. The District submitted to EPA a voluntary proposal that will remove the caulk from four locations at MHS by June 30, 2015. These locations previously tested above 50 ppm. The District will also take out light fixtures associated with previously removed PCB-containing ballasts at MHS and Juan Cabrillo Elementary (JCES), within a year. This work will ensure the District remains in compliance with TSCA.

Background

Public buildings built nationwide between 1950-1980 were constructed with caulk, light ballasts, and other building materials that contain PCBs. The EPA and others in the environmental scientific community are aware of this. However, the existence of PCBs in building materials does not represent a danger in and of itself. In order for PCBs to present a danger, there must be an exposure pathway. The pathways for exposure are inhalation or ingestion, not simply their presence in caulk. For that reason, the EPA recommends that testing of air and surface dusts be conducted for PCBs, as these are the tests that evaluate whether occupants of the buildings are being exposed to PCBs. The EPA has adopted health-based thresholds for PCBs in air and dust and it is the EPA thresholds which have guided the District's testing.

As a result of the scientific process, the District has re-opened all buildings on both campuses, with the exception of the two rooms previously noted, allowing teachers to prepare their classrooms for the start of school. Testing results for each building can be found by clicking the appropriate link/building name.

August 14 – Malibu High School, Woodshop Building (Building G)
August 13 – Malibu High School, Classroom Building D
August 13 – Juan Cabrillo Elementary, Classrooms Buildings D &E/Library (Building F)
August 11 – Malibu High School, Media & Graphic Arts Building (Building I)
August 11 – Juan Cabrillo Elementary, Classroom Building C
August 8 – Malibu High School, Music Building (Building F)
August 6 – Juan Cabrillo Elementary, Administration & Classroom Buildings (Building A & B)
August 5 – Malibu Middle School, Classroom/Blue Shark Building (Building E)
August 4 – Malibu High School, Cafeteria/Auditorium (Building H)
July 28 – Malibu High School, Administration (Building B/C)
July 28 – Malibu High School, Library (Building A)
July 18 – Malibu High School, Old Gym (Building J)

For more information:
Malibu Environment Program:
http://www.smmusd.org/PublicNotices/Malibu.html
EPA letter to Sen. Boxer:
http://www.smmusd.org/PublicNotices/press/ResponsetoSenBoxer.pdf
EPA letter to SMMUSD:
http://www.smmusd.org/PublicNotices/superintendent/EPAtoSL081414.pdf