

Illinois Department of
**Public
Health**

George H. Ryan, Governor • John R. Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H., Director

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January 23, 2002

#41070101 **RECEIVED**

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DIVISION OF
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Mr. Gary Stevens, Principal
Sparta Primary Attendance Center
119 Legion Drive
Sparta, IL 62286

Dear Mr. Stevens:

An investigation into indoor air quality complaints and mold at the Sparta Primary Attendance Center was requested on October 17, 2001. You and Mr. Mike Dieffenbach, head of building maintenance, were present during the building inspection on October 30, 2001. No active mold growth was noted during the inspection.

The School was built in 1978 and houses Kindergarten through Third grade students. The roof leaked in various spots for about four years. In 1994 a new roof was put on the building which stopped the leaking. Since this new roof was installed it has been reported that the rooms felt damper. Each exterior classroom has its own heating, cooling, and ventilation system, which are expected to be replaced after the end of this school year.

During the inspection, water damaged ceiling tiles were noted, however Mr. Dieffenbach stated that these were damaged prior to the roof being replaced. No mold was noted at the time of inspection. The space between the ceiling and the roof was visually inspected in one of the rooms that had damaged ceiling tiles. No mold was noted above the ceiling tiles in this room.

A questionnaire was sent to you for distribution among the school staff. Twenty-five of the questionnaires were completed. A summary of the results is as follows. All 25 participants had at least one complaint about the indoor air. The most common complaint was lack of air circulation followed by odors, and temperature (either too hot or too cold). Mold was specifically mentioned in 3 out of the 25 questionnaires. Symptoms associated with these complaints included sinus irritation, headaches, and eye irritation. These symptoms were most prevalent during warm, humid weather, but much of the time the symptoms were reported to occur during the heating season. Most reported that symptoms began after moving into the building.

The following recommendations are being made based on the inspection and questionnaire review.

1. Increase ventilation to the building by making adjustments to the air handling units and opening doors and windows when feasible. The American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air-Conditioning Engineers' Standard Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality recommends 15 cubic feet per minute per person in classrooms.
2. De-humidify rooms that have excess moisture or mold problems.
3. When replacing the air handling units make sure that the wall units provide adequate ventilation and heating and cooling capacity. The ASHRAE Standard 62-1999- Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality should be used in determining which air handling units would be sufficient for your classrooms. The thermal comfort requirements based on temperature, humidity and other factors can be found in the ASHRAE Standard 55-1992, Thermal Environmental Conditions for Human Occupancy.
4. Make sure that all roof runoff water is carried away from the building.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the Edwardsville Regional Office, #22 Kettle River Drive, Glen Carbon, Illinois 62034 or telephone 618/656-6680.

Sincerely,



David R. Webb

cc: Edwardsville Regional Office
Division of Environmental Health *DRW*