

Illinois Department of
**Public
Health**

Jim Edgar, Governor • John R. Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H., Director

2309 West Main Street • Marion, Illinois 62959

March 20, 1998

MARION COUNTY - Central City
Log #503179801



Mr. Charles Lewis
Central City School
129 Douglas Street
Centralia, IL 62801

Dear Mr. Lewis:

Our Department has been assisting you in the investigation of indoor air problems at the Central City School. On Tuesday, March 17, 1998, it came to our attention that fumes of unknown origin inside the school resulted in several occupants becoming ill and subsequent closure of the school until the problem could be identified and corrected.

Don Gallamore, a plumbing inspector with this Department, inspected the school plumbing in an effort to determine if faulty plumbing was a source of the fumes. According to Mr. Gallamore, several plumbing defects were noted and are being corrected. The plumbing defects included faulty vent piping and dry floor and sink drains. All of these defects could allow fumes from the sanitary sewer to enter into the school structure. A number of contaminants can be present in sewer gas. Because of this, it is essential that all plumbing fixtures be properly vented to the outside.

In addition to Mr. Gallamore's inspection, Gary Patschke also investigated the recent pesticide application by 3-D Pest Control Company at the school. At this time, the information obtained does not indicate the pesticide was used improperly or was a source of the odor.

The correction of the plumbing defects should eliminate the release of sewer gas into the school building. Although the exact nature and concentration of fumes originating from the sanitary sewer is not known, the exposure to affected individuals appears to be a brief exposure with no lingering effects expected. In addition to source control, ensuring an adequate fresh outdoor air supply has been shown to be the single most effective method of correcting and preventing problems and minimizing complaints related to poor indoor air quality.

If you have any questions or we can be of additional assistance, do not hesitate to contact our Regional office staff at the Marion Regional Office, telephone 618/993-7010, TDD number 1/800-547-0466 (for the hearing impaired only).

Sincerely,



James M. Buitt
Regional Supervisor

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cc: Div. Of Env. Health - ET ✓
MRO-Plumbing
MRO-ET
MRO-SPC