



JOINT INDOOR AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE

Newsletter

August 2003

Questions, Suggestions, or Problems?

Contact: Jeff Fidlin (Chair), x76873 or Sue Ruggles, x76276

Welcome to the August 2003 edition of the joint Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Committee newsletter. Our aim is to keep you informed about air quality issues and to help you resolve problems or concerns.

From the Chair...

Good indoor air quality is essential to a productive teaching and learning environment for faculty, staff, and students. We ask your assistance in helping us carry out this important work.

--Jeff Fidlin, Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator

Indoor Air Quality Survey Results

We conducted a survey during the spring to address issues of second-hand smoke at entrances, dry erase markers, and fragranced cleaning products. These issues come up repeatedly in IAQ Requests for Action. Ninety people replied to the newsletter survey, and an additional 75 people replied to the email version, for a total of 165.

Smoke-Free Entrances

An overwhelming majority (78%) are bothered by second-hand smoke at entrances, and most feel that some entrances should be designated smoke-free (74%). A little less than half say they avoid entrances where smokers congregate (44%), and that they have health problems that are aggravated by second-hand smoke (45%). Twenty-one note that they have asthma or allergies, which makes second-hand smoke hazardous. Most respondents (76%) favor the installation of outdoor shelters for smokers, which would protect the rights of smokers along with the health of nonsmokers.

Dry Erase Markers

Of those who say that they use markers (39%), about three-quarters (77%) say that the fumes bother them, and more than one-third have health problems they feel are aggravated by markers. Nearly half (46%) of all respondents say that only nontoxic markers should be available.

Fragrances

Many people (46%) are bothered by fragrances, about one-third are bothered by scented cleaning products, and 24% have health problems they feel are related to fragrances. Almost half (49%) favor the adoption of a low-fragrance or no-fragrance policy.

Recommendations

Based on these results, the IAQ Committee recommends that the college's smoking policy be reviewed and revised. We recommend that the main entrance and other high-traffic entrances of all campus buildings be designated smoke-free, and suggest that the installation of smoking shelters would help with compliance and enforcement.

Since a large majority of dry erase marker users are bothered by the fumes, and many have health concerns, the IAQ Committee recommends that the college supply nontoxic low-VOC markers. This change is supported by nearly half of all those who replied, whether or not they use dry erase markers.

Nearly half of survey respondents are also bothered by fragrances. Because fragrances pose serious health risks, and can serve as a trigger for asthma and allergies, the IAQ committee recommends that the college investigate and purchase low-fragrance, low-VOC cleaning products and disinfectants.

Please contact the IAQ Committee if you would like the complete survey results.

Construction Services Update

C Building HVAC Renovation – Work on the new air-cooled chiller replacement for MPTV is complete. The new chiller occupies the north half of the A-Lot between Foundation Hall and the A Building.

Further work on the C Building HVAC project has been put on hold until a new Milwaukee Campus chiller plant can be completed. While FY04 funds have been allocated for the initial stage of the plant, an additional five years will probably be required to complete the project and continue with C Building HVAC improvements.

Request for Action Update

S Building – S101, S114, S209, and S215 continue to be monitored for concerns about stained ceiling tiles, damaged carpeting, foul odors, and poor air circulation. The base flooring in S114 will be cleaned and sealed, and new floor covering will be installed when the FY2003-04 budget is set. Ventilation will run continuously until the new flooring is replaced. In S101 and S215, the carpet was cleaned and ventilation checked. Ceiling tiles have been replaced as reported.

T Building – T106 will continue to be monitored for sewer gas odors.

H Building – A construction project began in June to install a ventilation system in the mechanical room next to H150 to keep the mechanical room and adjacent classrooms cooler. Plumbing, heating, electrical, and mechanical fixtures and equipment had to be relocated in order to make a large opening in the outside wall. It is anticipated that the project will be completed shortly after the fall semester begins.

Main Building – Ceiling tiles were replaced in M319 after a water leak was repaired.

West Campus – Water standing at the baseboard and a foul odor was reported in Rooms 146 and 152. During semester break, the plumbing and heating systems were repaired, and the damaged drywall replaced.

IAQ Five-Year Progress Report

In 1998, Local 212 received a grant from the American Federation of Teachers to carry out a survey of indoor air quality. Jonathan Rosen, an AFT certified industrial hygienist, conducted the study, and presented his findings in a report published in March 1999.

Since then, the college has made some notable improvements, but much still needs to be done. This is a summary of the five-year progress report put together by Local 212 and Local 587, with input from the college's representatives on the IAQ Committee.

The following positive steps have been taken to address IAQ concerns:

- 1) Establishment of a Joint Indoor Air Quality Committee consisting of representatives from Local 212, Local 587, the Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator, Engineering Services, and Construction Services.
- 2) Establishment of a procedure for dealing with IAQ concerns, using the Request for Action form.
- 3) Adoption of the EPA's Tools for Schools, which provides a process for resolving IAQ concerns.

There have also been improvements in the physical environment of the college:

- 1) Relocation of the fresh air intake of the C Building to the roof, which prevents the entry of exhaust fumes into the building.
- 2) A new HVAC study of the C Building, which recommends an upgrade of the air handling system, air conditioning, and improvements in energy efficiency.
- 3) Replacement of the T Building roof, and the removal of water-damaged materials on the third and fourth floors.
- 4) Implementation of an Integrated Pest Management Program to reduce the use of pesticides.
- 5) Separation of food wastes from other trash, and placement into a covered dumpster, which reduces the odors near the T Building Loading Dock.

However, many issues still remain unresolved. The starred recommendations are from the 1998 Indoor Environmental Quality Report, which have not yet been implemented.

- 1) *Until there is a new air handling system in the C Building that conforms to ASHRAE standards, existing systems need to be cleaned, maintained, tested, and balanced.
- 2) *Evaluate ventilation systems in the Chemistry, Printing, Cosmetology, and Auto areas to make sure they are in compliance with industry standards.
- 3) *Review MATC's compliance with the Wisconsin State Code throughout the District and make corrections to the ventilation systems as needed.

- 4) *Develop an Indoor Air Quality Management Plan, including written procedures for renovations, inspections, and replacement of water-damaged materials.
- 5) *Update and redesign the Hazard Communication Program so that current Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are available and all employees are trained to be familiar with hazards and controls.
- 6) *Conduct an assessment for personal protective equipment, as required by OSHA standards 29 CFR 1910.132-37.
- 7) *Install improved controls for the ventilation system in Cosmetology, and a modified downdraft table to reduce fume emissions from Nail Technology.
- 8) *Offer training to members of the IAQ Committee so that they can more effectively carry out their duties.
- 9) *Ensure that chemical spill and emergency procedures are established and posted in areas of chemical use.
- 10) *Review the Integrated Pest Management Program to ensure that ventilation procedures and notification requirements are being followed.
- 11) *Monitor live engine work in the High School Contract Auto classroom (C152) to ensure that proper ventilation controls are in place.
- 12) Clean air ducts and replace filters throughout the college, to improve air quality and increase efficiency of the ventilation system.
- 13) Remove worn and damaged carpeting in C Building classrooms and offices, including C252, C256, C270, C278, C282, C284, C286, C332, C334, and C336.
- 14) Replace carpeting in the S Building, including S114 and S101, that has been damaged by leaking glycol from the heating and cooling system.
- 15) Remove all hazardous PCB fluorescent lighting ballasts, and replace with safe, energy efficient ballasts.

We feel that implementation of these measures would not only improve air quality, but also enhance the environment for teaching and learning. They would cost relatively little, yet improve energy efficiency, improve student performance, improve employee morale, reduce absenteeism and healthcare costs, and save money in the long run.

For a copy of the complete IAQ Progress Report, please contact the IAQ Committee.

Calling North, South and West Campuses

The IAQ Committee serves the entire District and welcomes more participation from the North, South or West Campuses. If you would like to become involved, please contact Mary Musinsky at Ext. 77851 if you are a Local 587 member, or Wendi Halstead at Ext. 77411 or Sue Ruggles at Ext. 76276 if you are a Local 212 member.

INDOOR AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE Request for Action Form

Name:

Date:

Campus:

Phone:

Dept:

Room:

Request for Action

Please describe your indoor air quality concern briefly below. Include the room number, department or area, and any suggestions you may have for resolution of the problem.

Return Form to:

Jeff Fidlin, Indoor Air Quality Committee, Milwaukee Campus, M2, Ext. 76873, with copy to Sue Ruggles, Local 212, FH7, Ext. 76276, or Mary Musinsky, Local 587, H116E, Ext. 77851.