

**INDOOR AIR QUALITY PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOLS****Category:** Facilities**Effective:** August 2013**Policy Statement**

With an increase in air quality concerns in schools, there is a need for consistent procedures. The focus of the policy is to ensure that students and all staff and the public are protected. Anglophone West School District values the health of its students and staff and is committed to providing a scent-reduced learning/working environment.

Three aspects of a good indoor environment are; control of airborne pollutants, proper fresh air distribution and good housekeeping.

Unlike other buildings, schools have unique characteristics;

- They are primarily designed for and occupied by children.
- Occupant densities are higher - a typical school has approximately four times as many occupants as office buildings with the same amount of floor space.
- Schools are used for a variety of activities: offices, classrooms, kitchens, staff rooms, industrial arts, chemistry and biology labs, art, gym, etc.

The most common indicator of an indoor environmental concern is occupant complaint. Establishing a means to record and track complaints is the foundation of this protocol. It is imperative that each step be documented.

**Procedures**

1. Good air quality begins with good housekeeping practices, regular maintenance and instructional activities that do not contribute to poor indoor air quality; however, when an indoor air quality concern is suspected a Referral Form shall be completed and submitted to the School Principal. The Principal, the School Health and Safety Committee and the Indoor Air Quality Coordinator are provided with copies of the Referral Forms will review the referral to determine if the concern can be resolved at the school level.
2. Whenever possible, purchase cleaning products that are free from added fragrance. Ensure that products used in our facilities are used in a safe and effective manner.
3. Referrals that contain issues with a specifically identified medical component, or those requiring action beyond the capability of the school staff shall be forwarded to the District's Environmental/Health & Safety Coordinator.
4. If necessary, a site visit will be promptly arranged to ensure that mechanical systems in the school are operating properly and that all appropriate maintenance has been performed. Following this visit, a status report will be forwarded to the School Principal.

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5. If no obvious cause is found, a more intensive investigation will be carried out. If concerns are not able to be resolved at the District level, other government departments and/or agencies will be consulted.
6. During an investigation, there must be regularly on-going communication between the investigators and the school.
7. **Filing a Report**
  - a. In order for this policy protocol to be activated, any employee who suspects that an environmental health risk exists, is required to file a written report (**IEQ1**) with the school Principal and with the School Health and Safety Committee.
  - b. This record will be kept at the school level, with a copy forwarded to the Education Centre. An action plan and assessment will be put in place the same day.
8. **Assessment/Action Plan**
  - a. The school Principal or designate will do a preliminary assessment of the situation. Any steps, which can be taken locally, will be done and noted on the report. Any action taken or planned action will be reported to the complainant within 48 hours/2 working days. This will be done on form **IEQ1**.
  - b. If the situation cannot be resolved at the school level, the principal will, within 48 hours of receipt of the complaint, inform the District Facility Management of the expressed concern (via E-mail or Fax) and will forward a copy of the report.
  - c. Upon receiving a written report from a Principal, the District Facility
    - i. Management or designate will, within 5 days, file a report with
    - ii. recommendations to the Principal with a copy to the Superintendent.
  - d. All information received as the result of the action plan will be distributed to the Principal.
  - e. Upon receipt of the District Facility Management's Report, or additional information under section 2.4, the Principal will forward the information to the appropriate staff, and School Health and Safety Committee.
  - f. When the District Facility Management has finished their assessment and no solution has been found, the District Facility Management will advise the Superintendent of the problem. The District Facility Management will also advise the Department of Education and the Department of Health of the problem, meeting with both departments within 5 working days. Should the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development advise, the Department of Supply and Services will also be involved at this time.
  - g. At this point, no more than 2 - 3 working weeks should have elapsed, since the initial complaint was given to the Principal.



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- h. Should the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Department of Health and Facility Management deem it necessary, a team of different disciplines will be put together at this time. The team will be made up of the Superintendent/designate, Principal, Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Supply and Services, Facility Management, and a W.H.S.C.C. officer.