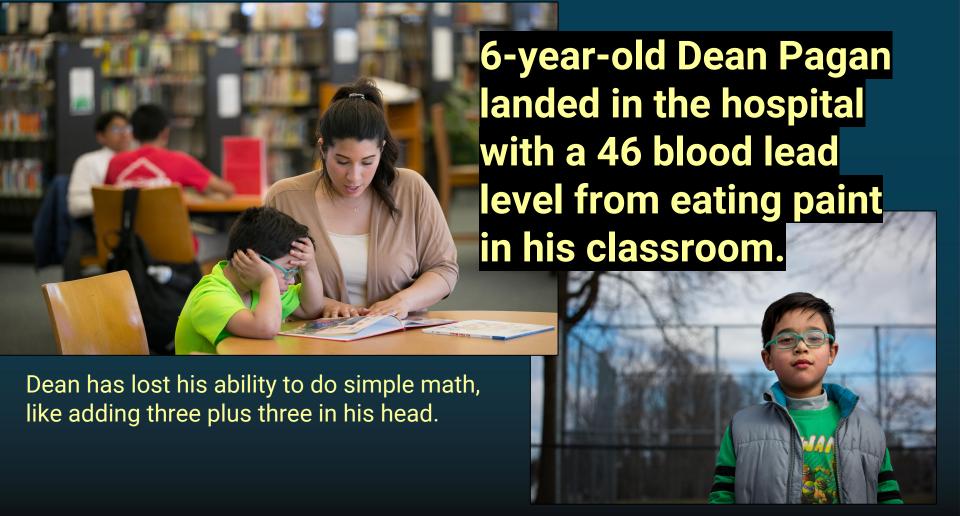
TOXIC CITY **№** SICK SCHOOLS

Barbara Laker, Wendy Ruderman and Dylan Purcell Edited by Jim Neff; photos by Jessica Griffin

The Philadelphia Inquirer & Daily News



Supported by grants from USC Center for Health Journalism, the Dennis A. Hunt Fund for Health Journalism, and the Lenfest Institute for Journalism.

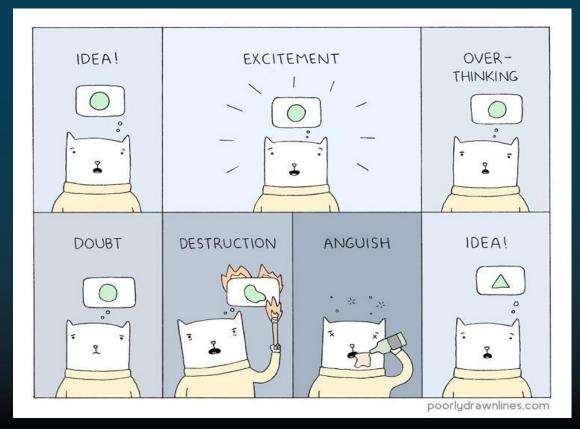


So you're thinking of investigating environmental hazards inside public schools?

Asthma triggers: mold, rodents and cockroaches

<u>Carcinogens:</u> asbestos fibers and silica dust

Toxins: lead in water and damaged lead paint (and lead dust)



OK, how does your school district track problems and how is that data stored?

- Maintenance logs
- Work orders
- Asbestos surveys (AHERA)
- Drinking water survey and test results
- Building-level asthma numbers (# of students with asthma, # of attacks by month, # of times meds given)
- Paint and plaster surveys
- Facility Condition Assessments (FCAs)
- Renovation and construction contracts and budgets

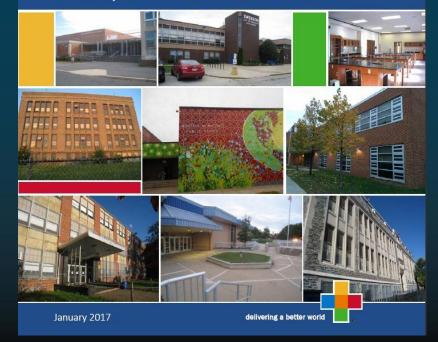
The school district paid an engineering firm to rate its 300 buildings from best to worst

This became our first dataset





School District of Philadelphia
Facility Condition Assessment



Some schools rated so poorly it would be cheaper to replace them, if only they had the land.

Instead they patch and patch

PARSONS

BUILDINGS WITH FCI > 60%

21 buildings in SDP's facility portfolio have FCI greater than 60%, of which 1 building is closed.

Tables below categorize the buildings by facility type. This FCI tier does not include any building in Middle / Middle Secondary category.

High School / CTE / Alternative Ed Ctr / CAPA (1 total)

	Bldg ID	Building Name	Year Built	Gross Area (5.F.)	Repair Cost	Replacement Value	FCI %
В	240001	Peirce, WS (closed)	1929	76,630	\$23,960,422	\$37,771,456	63.44%

Elementary School / LSH / PEC / Spec Ed (12 total)

Bldg ID	Building Name	Year Built	Gross Area (S.F.)	Repair Cost	Replacement Value	FCI %
B525001	Dunbar	1932	53,200	\$13,855,861	\$22,916,164	60.46%
B438001	Peirce, TM	1908	62,000	\$18,843,451	\$30,380,560	62.02%
B129001	Hamilton	1970	89,500	\$28,328,697	\$44,906,143	63.08%
B547001	Cramp	1969	80,088	\$25,678,231	\$39,750,240	64.60%
B622001	Emlen	1926	74,500	\$23,863,790	\$36,832,655	64.79%
B820001	Allen, Ethan	1930	66,482	\$21,838,552	\$33,465,820	65.26%
B630001	Logan	1924	65,000	\$21,335,512	\$32,381,280	65.89%
B221001	Bache-Martin	1906	45,300	\$16,345,458	\$23,575,460	69.33%
B623001	Fitler	1898	38,000	\$13,989,789	\$19,207,000	72.84%
B541001	Sheppard	1898	34,000	\$13,236,239	\$17,275,280	76.62%
B540001	Richmond	1929	48,300	\$16,748,313	\$21,193,242	79.03%
B424001	Cassidy	1924	59,123	\$24,971,234	\$30,252,903	82.54%

School boards approve contractors for lead paint, asbestos, roofing and other repair work

The district also tracks capital spending and makes plans years into the future

The School District of Philadelphia The Office of Capital Programs

Summary of Completed Capital Projects 5th Councilmanic District

School	Project	Completion Date	Contract Amount
Adaire	Roof and Masonry Repairs	11/30/07	\$573,174
Allen, Ethel	Transformer Replacement	5/18/07	\$66,622
Allen, Ethel	Major Renovation	7/15/09	\$4,778,602
Allen, Ethel	Fire Alarm Replacement	5/13/11	\$206,358
Bache/Martin	Site improvements Campus Parks	1/23/08	\$85,817
Bache/Martin	Classroom Modernization	6/15/11	\$499,393
Bethune	K to 8 Expansion	4/10/07	\$558,820
Blaine	Elevator Replacement	10/13/10	\$322,015
Bus Garage	Structural Repairs	6/19/07	\$3,369,150
Bus Garage	Structural Repairs	6/9/08	\$1,096,715
Carver, George Washington High	New Addition and Major Renovations	5/30/09	\$36,708,203
Carver, George Washington High	Structural Modifications	8/19/14	\$176,500
Clymer, George	K to 8 Expansion	7/31/07	\$740,105
Clymer, George	Site improvements Campus Parks	12/14/07	\$192,751
Clymer, George	Boiler Replacement	10/1/09	\$1,367,810
Clymer, George	ADA Modifications	1/13/12	\$22,986
Clymer, George	New Electric Service	6/28/13	\$160,972
Dick, William	K to 8 Expansion	10/23/08	\$377,724
Dick, William	Emergency Generator	11/13/13	\$237,750
Dobbins HS	Selective Building Demolition	6/25/15	\$109,800

Our best data: We used school maintenance logs to come up the most rundown elementary schools and guide staffers to test. (In Philly, it's called the IEQ dashboard)

Here, JB Kelly elementary had moldy, damaged asbestos in a kindergarten room:

A	В	С	D	E	F	G	Н	1	J	K	Ĺ	М	N	0
Location 🕌	ULCS No *	п	Date Issu 🕌	Location (Room/Area	Quanti	Recommended Corrective Action	Category -	Trade 1	Additional Trades	Notes	Status	Repe: 🕌	Date of Update	Location Close
Kelly J.B. ES	6470	76	3/16/2016	Room 102		Increase pest management activity at this location.	Point Source	IPM		Mouse dripping were observed in sections of the room around the TV cart and sink.	closed	No	3/24/2016	NO
Kelly J.B. ES	6470	77	3/16/2016	Room 111		Replace the fiberglass pipe insulation on the dual temperature line.	Mold Moisture	Steamfitting		The mold growth on the insulation was remediated and pipe leak was repaired. The ceiling tiles were missing and the piping needs to be reinsulated	closed	No	4/6/2016	NO
Kelly J.B. ES	6470	78	3/16/2016	Kindergarten (K- 3) Back Vestibule		Replace the fiberglass pipe insulation on the dual temperature line.	Mold/Moisture	Steamfitting		Pipe insulation was missing from the line located above the suspended	closed	No	3/16/2016	NO
Kelly J.B. ES	6470	79	3/16/2016	Kindergarten (K- 3) Closet		An asbestos Design Data Collection (DDC) package was issued on 3/17/16.	Mold/Moisture	Environmental		Water stained fiberglass pipe insulation was observed. This section of pipe insulation is covered with a layer of asbestos containing textured ceiling overspray.	closed	No	4/13/2016	МО
Kelly J.B. ES	6470	80	3/16/2016	Kindergarten (K- 3) Closet		Replace the fiberglass pipe insulation on the dual temperature line.	Mold/Moisture	Steamfitting		Pipe insulation was missing from a section of piping.	closed	No	3/16/2016	NO
Kelly J.B. E8	6470	81	11/10/2016	Room 105	16 LF	A mold Design Data Collection (DDC) package was issued on 11/10/16.	Mold/Moisture	Environmental		Mold growth was observed on the fiberglass pipe insulation located above the suspended ceiling near the teacher's desk.	closed	No	12/29/2016	NO
Kelly J.B. E8	6470	82	11/10/2016	Room 105	1 EA	Evaluate and repair the leaking pipe above the suspended ceiling.	Mold/Moisture	Steamfitting		An active leak was observed on a 4" line located above the suspended ceiling near the teacher's desk. The teacher indicated it has been leaking for months and rusted the metal file	closed	No	1/18/2017	NO

ged by the leaking radiator in the 1st floor hallway. The IEQ, or Indoor M N Date of Notes Status Repeat Update Minor damage was observed on an closed No 3/20/2017 asbestos insulated pipe riser. A section of asbestos pipe insulation will require removal to allow for repair 3/20/2017 No closed to the plaster that was damaged by the leaking radiator in the 1st floor Water appeared to be leaking from an 3/9/2017 uninsulated elbow passing through the No closed boiler room window. A small puddle of water was observed on the floor. 3/10/2017 No Sticky traps with mice on them were closed 3/10/2017 observed. No closed

Environmental Quality, database has many fields:

- School
- Room location
- Corrective action
- Repeat problem?
- Status. Fixed?

Photos can be vital. This is what a moldy pipe at JB Kelly looked like:







Request copies of federally required AHERA reports on asbestos

This one shows damaged asbestos found in several areas during one school inspection:

Section I - C.4

Information on the AHERA inspection that noted damage to various Building Materials at this location is contained in updates to the Management Plan. These updates are kept on file by the School District of Philadelphia and were reviewed for this project. Work orders are created for Corrective Action responses and tracked for completion. Updates to the Management Plan include the following:

Periodic (Six-Month) Surveillance (Damaged Materials)

Date	Element	Floor	On Site Room Name	Material	Amount of Material	Amount of Damage
10/17/2016	1	BS	Hallway from Stairwell near Cafeteria/Kitchen to Boiler Room	Pipe Fitting Insulation	7 EA	1 EA
	1	DO		ripe ritting institation	/ EA	I EA
10/17/2016	1	BS	Fan Room adjacent to Smaller Cafeteria (Room 15)	Pipe Insulation > 6 inch	45 LF	1 LF
10/17/2016	1	BS	Storage Area behind Fan Room	Pipe Insulation 2-6 inch	6 LF	1 LF
10/17/2016	1	BS	Meter Room (Natural Gas & Water) used for Storage	Pipe Fitting Insulation	28 EA	1 EA
10/17/2016	1	BS	Tank Room (Between Meter Room and Boy's Restroom)	Pipe Fitting Insulation	14 EA	1 EA
10/17/2016	1	BS	Tank Room (Between Meter Room and Boy's Restroom)	Tank Insulation	296 SF	1 SF
10/17/2016	1	BS	Classroom 014 (ESOL Room)	Pipe Insulation 2-6 inch	90 LF	1 LF
10/17/2016	1	BS	Hallway between IMC and Boiler Room	Pipe Insulation 2-6 inch	82 LF	1 LF
10/17/2016	1	BS	Gymnasium	Pipe Fitting Insulation	26 EA	1 EA
10/17/2016	1	1	Teacher's Lounge	Pipe Insulation 2-6 inch	56 LF	1 LF
10/17/2016	1	1	Principal's Office Restroom	Pipe Insulation 2-6 inch	71 LF	1 LF
10/17/2016	1	1	Classroom 105	Pipe Fitting Insulation	12 EA	2 EA
10/17/2016	1	1	Classroom 106	Pipe Fitting Insulation	13 EA	1 EA

Ask your district if they've tested the water for lead

In Philly, little was reported about the school drinking water

We published all unsafe water outlets online, including ones they didn't shut off because they just missed the limit

Lead in drinking water

Schools built before 1986 are more likely to have pipes, fixtures and soldering that contains lead, which can leech into the water supply. The EPA says the concentration of lead in drinking water should not exceed an "action level" of 15 parts per billion (ppb). The district follows a lower threshold, 10 ppb. Ingesting slight amounts of lead can cause loss of IQ and behavioral problems in children.

LOCATION	TYPE	RESULT (PPB)	SAMPLE DATE
Cafeteria - Kitchen end of room	Drinking fountain	276	9/1/2016
Cafeteria - Elevator end of room - facing kitchen	Water cooler fountain	74.1	9/1/2016
Across From Room 508	Drinking fountain	56.1	8/18/2016
Across From Room 503	Drinking fountain	43	9/1/2016
Outside Room 115 - Right	Drinking fountain	36	8/18/2016
Basement - outside of Room 5D	Drinking fountain	36	8/18/2016
Teachers Lounge - Left	Drinking fountain	32.8	8/18/2016
Outside Room 321 - Right (left side has been removed)	Drinking fountain	28.1	8/18/2016
In the cafeteria - on the far wall past the kitchen	Drinking fountain	22.1	8/18/2016
Outside Room 321 - Right (left side has been removed)	Drinking fountain	21.4	9/1/2016
Outside of Room 17 - left	Drinking fountain	19.9	9/1/2016
Outside of Room 17 - left	Drinking fountain	19.7	8/18/2016
Across from Room 13	Drinking fountain	18.2	9/1/2016
Across From Room 503	Drinking fountain	16.6	8/18/2016
Cafeteria - Kitchen end of room	Drinking fountain	16.2	8/18/2016
Across from Room 13	Drinking fountain	16	8/18/2016
Outside Room 317	Drinking fountain	15.2	8/18/2016
Cafeteria - Elevator end of room - facing kitchen	Water cooler fountain	15.2	8/18/2016
Outside Room 414	Drinking fountain	13.2	8/18/2016
Outside Room 211 - Left	Drinking fountain	13.1	8/18/2016
Across from Room 303	Drinking fountain	12.9	8/18/2016
Outside Room 115 - Left	Drinking fountain	12.5	8/18/2016
Outside Room 305 - Right (left side has been removed)	Drinking fountain	12	8/18/2016

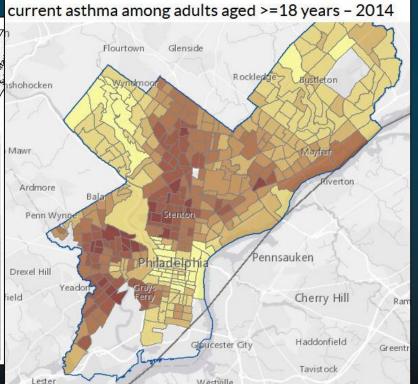
Where else can you get data on school conditions?

Local and State Health Departments

- Asthma rates; lead poisoning rates
- Asbestos permits or notifications
- Cafeteria inspections (rodents and cockroaches are asthma triggers)
- Asbestos complaints: Investigations, violations
- Data on asbestos contractors

The Health Department tracks asthma and so did the district

													(
School Maries	2778 Shipping	Orte Manual State	/ ''	Asimple of the second of the s	2617 C 170	Studen		Jozy Green on or of strange of st	Supplied 1516 fr.	Studen Aums		1556 Number of Assimon Of Of Assimon Of Of Assimon Of Of Assimon Of	20 00 00
1010 Bartram, John HS	575	83	0	2	729	100	2	0	716	109	6	0	
1020 West Philadelphia HS	470	101	0	4	527	116	12	0	468	102	0	0	
1030 HS of the Future	487	104	0	0	490	99	2	0	484	92	4	0	
1050 Robeson, Paul HS	306	65	0	0	326	85	2	0	290	76	0	0	ğ
1100 Sayre, William L. HS	435	92	0	2	573	124	7	1	515	113	4	1	١.
1130 Tilden MS	369	51	0	4	432	64	5	1	424	65	10	0	Н
1190 Motivation HS	412	75	0	0	393	74	5	2	334	56	3	0	
1200 Barry, John ES	652	72	0	0	789	77	12	2	726	89	20	78	1
1230 Bryant, William C. ES	421	55	0	0	462	69	23	255	468	93	18	45	k
1250 Catharine, Joseph W. ES	531	63	21	5	630	69	373	320	617	81	35	640	
1260 Comegys, Benjamin B. ES	510	71	0	1	577	62	15	48	550	49	2	3	
1280 Alexander, Sadie-Penn ES	577	32	0	0	615	65	20	178	549	69	21	13	
1290 Hamilton, Andrew ES	539	88	0	16	603	77	30	12	595	92	20	102	
1300 Harrington, Avery D. ES	491	64	0	0	563	85	7	1	541	93	22	10	
1340 Lea, Henry C. ES	553	106	12	37	594	103	748	102	543	123	32	251	
1350 Longstreth, William ES	412	87	0	0	518	126	17	265	497	129	25	123	
1360 McMichael, Morton ES	387	33	0	0	418	54	7	39	414	56	9	157	
1370 Mitchell, S. Weir ES	522	109	0	11	609	132	35	8	678	133	36	33	
1380 Morton, Thomas G. ES	634	75	0	12	722	81	22	102	668	87	25	30	
1390 Powel, Samuel ES	268	62	0	12	301	62	29	11	289	57	26	6	
1400 Patterson, John M. ES	578	66	0	5	731	98	19	26	693	110	49	87	fi
1410 Rhoads, James ES	555	98	1	30	607	84	35	72	525	60	12	120	
1420 Washington, Martha ES	363	93	0	27	424	114	26	8	436	125	31	120	
1440 Penrose ES	527	58	0	0	658	71	18	10	610	91	22	19	
1460 Anderson, Add B. ES	472	101	0	0	531	110	24	55	538	106	23	152	
1470 Locke, Alain ES	442	46	0	0	482	67	1	0	468	84	15	3	
1490 Blankenburg, Rudolph ES	449	98	0	6	492	90	23	3	477	86	18	1	



"Visible physical evidence of rodent activity (fresh and old mouse droppings) observed along the kitchen floor..."

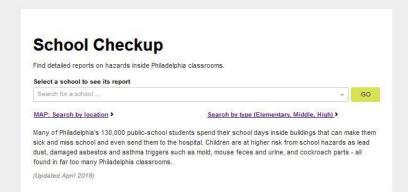
6	OBSERVATIONS AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS	ai .
Item Number	Violations cited in this report must be corrected within the time fram	nes below.
11	Violation of Code: [46.201] Mouse droppings observed on food storage shelves in the dry food sto	rage area. New Violation.
26	Violation of Code: [46.1028] Open bait observed on the floor of the dry food storage room. New \	√iolation.
36	Violation of Code: [46.981(k)(l)] Visible physical evidence of rodent activity (fresh and old mouse of floor and food storage floor perimeters, and on food storage shelves in the dry storage area. New	
45	Violation of Code: [46.671] Unused and defective equipments were observed in the kitchen area.	New Violation.
45	Violation of Code: [46.652] Walk-in cooler not properly sealed to the wall and does not permit add Violation.	equate space for proper cleaning. New
47	Violation of Code: [46.714] Walk-in cooler unit is not clean to sight. New Violation.	
48	Violation of Code: [46.805] Hot water at handwash sink in the food preparation area observed at 7	78°F. New Violation.
Summary Statements	This inspection has revealed that the establishment is not in satisfactory compliance. Corrective a violations. Compliance status will be assessed upon reinspection.	ction is required to eliminate these
violations ma another licen	red under Section 6-502 of the Philadelphia Health Code to correct the violations listed as noted result in the revocation of your health license and other legal action. Reinstatement of a revok- se fee. An appeal to these orders may be made to the Board of License and Inspection Review, iladelphia, PA 19102-1617	ed health license will require payment of
Person in C	harge (Signature) Margaret Young Jackson ServSafe exp. 6/9/2022	Date: 11/01/2017
Inspector (ignature) Sasha-Gaye Anglin (215) 685-7342	Date: 11/01/2017



SEARCH A SCHOOL THE HAZARDS V ABOUT THE TOOL SEARCH A SCHOOL

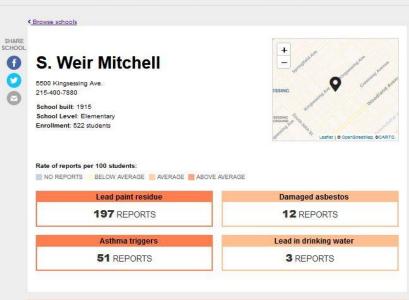
THE HAZARDS >

ABOUT THE TOOL





JESSICA GRIFFIN / Staff Photographer



Lead paint residue

Lead dust and residue from peeling paint can cause permanent neurological damage, including intelligence loss, hyperactivity and behavioral problems, especially in young children. The district assumes paint in schools built before 1978 contain lead. The deficiencies listed assume the presence of lead paint, based on description and age of the

■ DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL MAINTENANCE REPORTS O SIX-MONTH BUILDING SURVEYS

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	DATE ISSUED	
Room B6	Flaking paint was observed on the radiator covers.	11/30/2017	
Recomended action: Thi Issue status: closed	e flaking paint should be removed from the radiator covers and repainted using lead safe work practices.		
Room B6	Paint and plaster debris were observed on the window sills, conduit, and floors.	11/30/2017	-
Recomended action: The Issue status: closed	e paint and plaster debris should be removed from all horizontal surfaces using lead safe work practices.		
Room B6	Efflorescence was observed on sections of the window wall.	11/30/2017	
Recomended action: Th	e efflorescence should be removed from the walls and repainted as needed.		



Government/school data only took us so far. We wanted more.

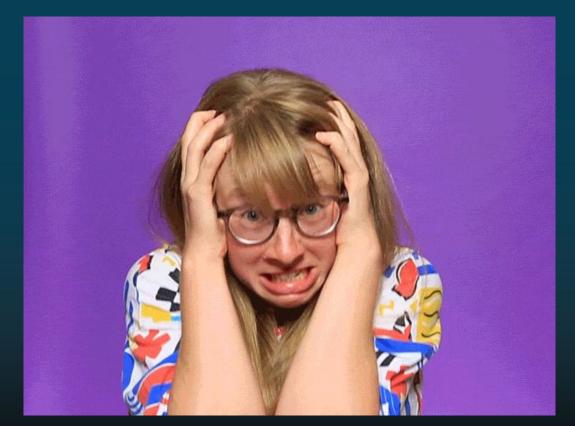
So we spent a day at a lab learning how to take dust-wipe samples to test for lead and asbestos.

But with no access to school buildings, we needed to enlist and train staffers.



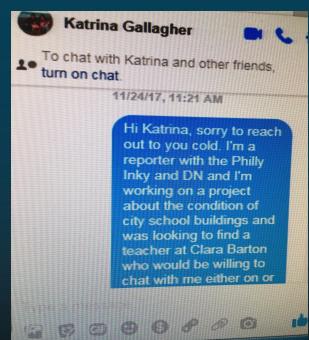
Finding teachers willing to take samples for us

was like...



We used a database of school salaries to identify teachers/staff in the worst schools with the worst classrooms. Then, we:

- Cold called
- Sent DMs through social media
- Chatted up teachers at union meetings and conferences



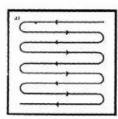
We purchased lab equipment and made testing kits with written instructions for teachers and staff

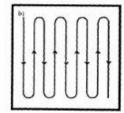


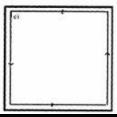
SAMPLING FOR ASBESTOS FIBERS WITH A DUST WIPE

Thank you for assisting our research project looking at the potential for asbestos fibers in settled dust. Follow these easy steps to complete this test:

- Find a place on the floor, a shelf, a desk top, a windowsill, a cubbyhole, or another area
 that appears to have dust or is located near and deteriorated asbestos and is accessible
 to small children and teachers. (You're looking for damaged or chipped floor tiles, pipe
 insulation, ceiling tile, plaster, spackle.) If you can, take a photo of the area prior to
 wining.
- Put on a pair of disposable gloves. Open the dust wipe sample packet and unfold the wipe.
- In a square area that is about 4 by 4 inches (or 10 by 10 centimeters), make as many 5like motions as needed to wipe the entire sample area, moving from side to side and top to bottom of the 4 by 4-inch square. Apply firm pressure on the wipe.
- Fold the wipe in half, keeping the dirty side in, and repeat the wiping procedure. (see below). Flip the wipe and repeat.
- Now fold the wipe into an even smaller square (roughly the size of the wipe packaging) and repeat again, concentrating on collecting dust from the edges and corners of the sample area.
- Stuff the wipe into the sample tube. Put the cap tightly on the container. On the label, write the school name, time and date, room number and specific area from which the sample was taken (such as Rm. 101, floor tile, under window ledge).

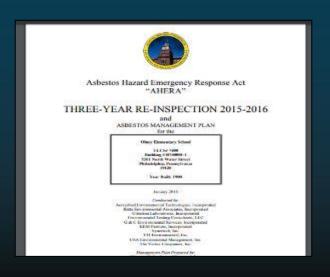


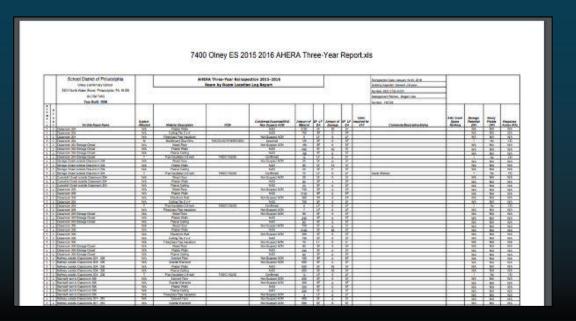




We taught them not only how to test but where to test, thanks to the data

For asbestos fibers, we relied heavily on school AHERA reports (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act):





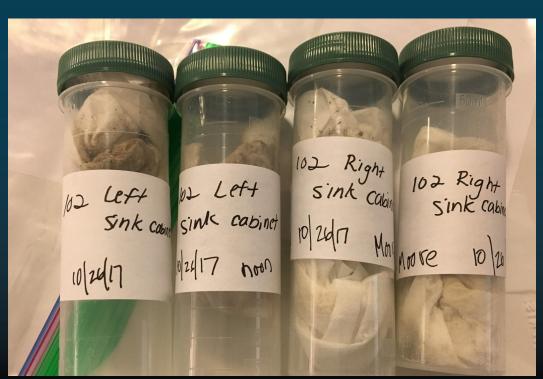
We asked teachers and staff to take photos of where they tested. This helped verify their work



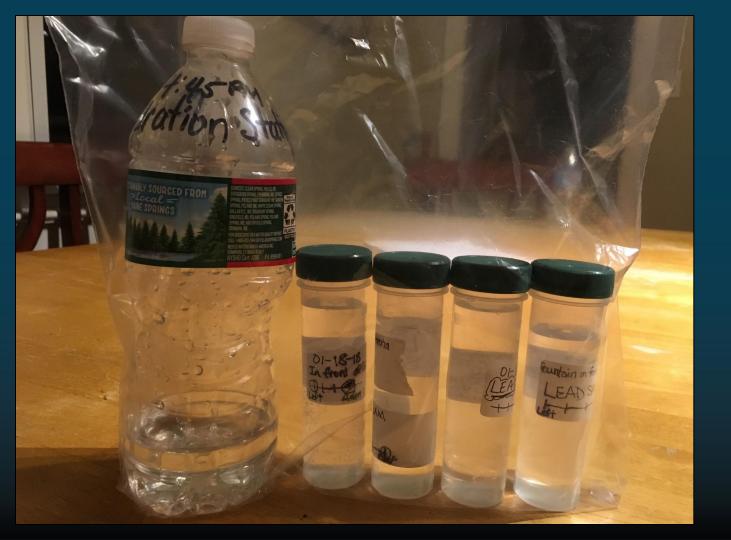


Damaged asbestos tiles in a school auditorium

There was some trial and error...







For instance, regular water bottles were fine and MUCH **MORE DISCREET**



water fountain at her school that tested at 44.6 ppb.

8.5 million cancer-causing asbestos fibers in settled dust





9000 Commerce Parkway Suite B Mt. Laurel, New Jersey 08054 Telephone: 856-231-9449 Email: customerservice@iatl.com

CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS

Client: Philadelphia Media Network

801 Market Street, Ste 300

Philadelphia PA 19107

Client: PHI001

Report Date: 6/7/2018 Report No .: 564984 - TEM Dust

TOXIC CITY: A.S. Jenks

Project No.:

TEM WIDE CAMDLE ANALYCIC CUMMADY

Lab No.:6522683 Client No.:1	Location: 106 Closet Floor Near Pipe Area (cm²): 100 Density (s/mm²): 942	Concentration (s/cm²): 4530000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile
Lab No.:6522684 Client No.:2	Location: Floor 106 With Scratch Area (cm*): 100 Density (s/mm*): 3920	Concentration (s/cm²): 1890000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile
Lab No.:6522685 Client No.:3	Location: Closet Tile Near Pipe Area (cm²): 100 Density (s/mm²): 4310	Concentration (s/cm²): 4140000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile Amosite
Lab No.:6522686 Client No.:4	Location: 106 Closet Near Pipe In Front Of Locker Area (cm²): 100 Density (s/mm²): 885	Concentration (s/cm²): 567000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile
Lab No.:6522687 Client No.:5	Location: Missing Tile 106 Closet Near Pipe Area (cm²): 100 Density (s/mm²): 590	Concentration (s/cm²): 2840000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile Amosite
Lab No.:6522688 Client No.:6	Location: Tile Next To Back Pipe Closet 106 Area (cm²): 100 Density (s/mm²): 654	Concentration (s/cm²): 3150000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile
Lab No.:6522689 Client No.:7	Location: Back Tile 106 Closet Near Pipe Area (cm²): 100 Density (s/mm²): 1460	Concentration (s/cm²): 1410000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile
Lab No.:6522690 Client No.:8	Location: Scratch Floor 106 Room (Classroom) Area (cm²): 100 Density (s/mm²): 154	Concentration (s/cm²): 74000 Asbestos Type(s): Chrysotile

Please refer to the Preface of this report for further information regarding your analysis.

6/1/2018 Date Analyzed: 06/07/2018 Signature: Mark Stewart

Approved By



Dated: 6/8/2018 10:16:52 Page 1 of 3

These are asbestos results from an elementary school in South Philly.

Scary amounts of asbestos fibers:

- 4.5 million
- 1.89 million
- 4.1 million
- 567,000
- 2.8 million
- 3.2 million

OVER 100,000 is DANGER LIMIT









We got the crazy idea to test for silica. I'm not kidding. And we did.....





