



Thompson Public Schools “Tools for Schools” Indoor Air Quality

“The mission of the Thompson Public Schools’ Indoor Air Quality Team is to improve and maintain good indoor environmental quality; thereby providing a sense of comfort, health and well being in a safe learning environment for all school occupants.”
Newsletter November 2006

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The TPS IAQ team is in need of new members.

Please take a moment to read our mission statement above, and our policy on the reverse.

If you or your child has ever experienced a respiratory illness due to allergies, asthma, or environmental factors, then you would be a great addition to our team.

Are you a student interested in environmental science or biology? Do you need community service for your college applications? This committee is for you!

Are you looking for a volunteer position within the school system? Well then, we are your ticket!

Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 5 pm in the Middle School Media Center.

Please join us! We appreciate your support!

HAND SANITIZERS ~ PLEASE NOTE:

While we truly appreciate the generous donations of commercial hand sanitizers, their use is not approved for classrooms in the Thompson Public School System.

How Germs Spread

The main way that illnesses like colds and flu are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This is called "droplet spread."

This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air and are deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Sometimes germs also can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches his or her own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands. We know that some viruses and bacteria can live 2 hours or longer on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs, and desks.

The CDC recommends that when you wash your hands -- with soap and warm water -- that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds. That's about the same time it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice!

Stop the Spread of Germs in Schools - Fast Facts

- Approximately 1/5 of the U.S. population attends or works in schools. (U.S. Dept of Ed, 1999).
- Some viruses and bacteria can live from 20 minutes up to 2 hours or more on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs, and desks. (Ansari, 1988; Scott and Bloomfield, 1989)
- Nearly 22 million school days are lost annually due to the common cold alone. (CDC, 1996)
- Addressing the spread of germs in schools is essential to the health of our youth, our schools, and our nation.
- Students need to get plenty of sleep and physical activity, drink water, and eat good food to help them stay healthy in the winter and all year.

http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/home_work_school.htm

**Make Hand-Washing
Hygiene Part of
Your Day**



TPS Policy for a Healthy School Environment 2006-2007

- The Thompson Public School System shall develop, implement and monitor a healthy learning environment plan designed to optimize conditions for learning and minimize human exposure to hazardous chemicals, allergens, irritants and pollutants which will address and include the following elements:
- An assessment of environmental factors that can enhance or detract from student learning and comfort, including lighting, ventilation, temperature, noise, availability of drinking water quality and sanitation facilities;
- An assessment of environmental factors that are potentially harmful to human health, including tobacco smoke, pests, mold, pollen, dust mites, animal dander, chalk dust, cleaning agents, scented and unscented personal care products, volatile organic chemicals, (VOCs), laboratory chemicals, un-vented fumes, vehicle exhaust, asbestos, lead and other substances in drinking water, arsenic treated lumber, radon and excessive exposure to the sun;
- A plan for the physically isolated storage, safe usage and proper disposal of cleaning agents and other hazardous chemicals that cannot be eliminated from school buildings and grounds;
- Procedures to ensure the schools' ongoing compliance with the maintenance schedules for the clean and efficient operation of heating, ventilation and plumbing systems;
- Procedure for minimizing human exposure to the exhaust of school buses and other vehicles;
- Diesel exhaust: To minimize potentially harmful emissions, drivers shall turn off diesel school bus engines as soon as they arrive at a loading or unloading area and not restart until ready to depart. Idling for engine warm-up will be as brief as possible. Diesel school buses must be parked and loaded at a sufficient distance from school buildings to prevent diesel fumes from being drawn into school ventilation systems. The TPS shall endeavor to retrofit diesel engines with exhaust reduction equipment or purchase low emission vehicles to the greatest feasible extent;
- Mechanisms for resolving cases of hazardous chemical exposure and air and water quality problems as they occur;
- Live animals shall not be kept inside TPS buildings because they are a significant asthma trigger; with the exception of assistive animals such as seeing eye dogs; and short-term curriculum-related animals;
- No plants shall be kept inside TPS buildings because they are a significant asthma trigger; with the exception of short-term curriculum-related plants;
- Specific action steps, strategies, and long term goals to address identified issue of concern.