

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** MCISD Parents and/or Guardians

**FROM:** Eric Hoogendoorn, Supervisor of Transportation, Buildings and Grounds

**DATE:** July, 2017

**SUBJECT:** ASBESTOS

The Institute for Environmental Assessment has been contracted by the School System to inspect all the MCISD buildings every three (3) years to determine if there are asbestos containing building products, especially in a form that could represent a risk. The inspections, along with a monthly visual inspection, have been done according to specifications set forth by MCISD. The following are the findings and recommendations.

### ***ASBESTOS AND HEALTH:***

In attempting to come to terms with asbestos in buildings, several issues must be considered. Until recently, the asbestos mineral was used in thousands of better constructed buildings as a fire retardant. Hundreds of thousands of tons were used in school buildings, hospitals, shopping centers and homes within the past several decades. The purpose was to prevent fires from starting or a building from collapsing once a fire had started. Asbestos is commonly found in floor and ceiling tile, acoustical soundproofing, on structural reinforcing, in decorative coatings, in pipe and heating equipment insulations, roof materials, carpet glue and even concrete. Of most concern are areas of asbestos-bearing materials which can be easily crumbled under pressure. Such materials create a potential for asbestos fiber release.

Exposure to airborne asbestos (tiny mineral particles which can be inhaled), especially in heavy doses, has been found to relate to several forms of cancer. Children and young adults who are exposed to asbestos are probably at greater risk than older people of developing certain asbestos related diseases. The Environmental Protection Agency has developed guidelines for schools to identify asbestos within buildings and the Institute has designed a system for determining relative risks and suggesting appropriate safety responses.

***FINDINGS: Administration Building***

Beyond the asbestos assumed to be located in concrete, roofing felts, pipe elbows, carpet glues, etc., which is a minimal public health concern, asbestos was found in some of the following types of material:

- Thermal pipe joint connections (removed January 2001)
- Vinyl floor tile (removed Summer of 2007)

***FINDINGS: Education Center***

Beyond the asbestos assumed to be located in concrete, roofing felts, pipe elbows, carpet glues, and floor tile etc., which is of minimal public health concern, no asbestos was found.

***FINDINGS: Holiday Camp***

Beyond the asbestos assumed to be located in concrete, roofing felts, pipe elbows, carpet glues, and floor tile etc., which is of minimal public health concern, no asbestos was found.

***RECOMMENDATIONS:***

We have developed some general recommendations for the School System regarding procedures for dealing with material that may contain asbestos. These recommendations will contribute to the safeguarding of all building occupants. Detailed descriptions of the recommendations are available for review in the office of the Supervisor of Transportation, Buildings, and Grounds. You can also call 242-5799 extension 1345 with any questions concerning the asbestos program.

***WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN:***

Asbestos found in schools can be dealt with safely and responsibly. The Environmental Protection Agency states:

It is important to note that not all friable (easily pulverized) asbestos-containing material need be removed from schools. Once the material has been identified, a program can be implemented to insure that the material is maintained in good condition and that appropriate precautions are followed when the material is disturbed for any reason.

School officials began the risk assessment process by having their buildings inspected and analyzing any suspect materials.

Based in part on the long-term past commitment of the School System to safeguarding public health, the Institute is assured that the appropriate responses will be implemented.