



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **District Publishes Indoor Environmental Testing Summary**

### **REMINDER: *Next Periodic Sampling Set for Winter Break***

SMMUSD has released a report summarizing this year's indoor environmental work conducted at Malibu High School and Juan Cabrillo Elementary School in response to concerns about PCB contamination. In addition to outlining the scientific process undertaken and once again publicly reporting results that determined the schools were safe based on federally recognized benchmarks, the report also summarizes "Future Monitoring Plans" to address questions by community members about next steps in promoting clean, safe classrooms.

The technical report was developed by ENVIRON International Corporation (ENVIRON), the environmental consultant that conducted the scientific testing program. Inspection and sampling activities were conducted in all nine pre-1981 buildings at MHS and all six pre-1981 buildings at JCES. To evaluate potential exposures to PCBs and the effectiveness of PCB Best Management Practices (BMP) cleaning, the District voluntarily collected 163 air and 504 surface wipe samples. The sampling was compared with health-based screening levels established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), before and after the implementation of BMPs.

"We asked ENVIRON to develop this report to ensure our parents and staff have a solid understanding of the magnitude of the testing program and the results that led the EPA to validate that our schools are safe for students and staff," said SMMUSD Superintendent Sandra Lyon. "We also want our parents to have a very clear understanding of the future monitoring that will be conducted to ensure our schools are environmentally safe and clean for our students."

### **Next Steps**

The following cleaning and monitoring steps were part of the plan EPA approved on October 31<sup>st</sup> for the four specific areas at MHS (the library and Rooms 1, 5, and 8 in Building E) under EPA's oversight. The District is voluntarily implementing the plan for all the pre-1981 buildings at MHS and JCES.

**Cleaning:** While the appropriate frequency of the plan's specified annual BMP cleaning will continue to be assessed with additional sampling in the future, the results from the June through August 2014 sampling program indicate that a frequency of one annual BMP cleaning is more than sufficient to generally reduce or maintain PCB levels on indoor surfaces and in the indoor air below EPA's health based benchmarks.

**Monitoring:** The four areas under specific EPA oversight and a representative subset of randomly chosen, regularly occupied rooms will be re-sampled during the 2014/2015 winter break. These will be air and

surface wipe samples on and around surfaces with high skin exposure potential, such as desks and tables. A similar approach, based on the collective results of the summer 2014 and winter 2014/2015 sampling programs, will be used to select rooms for a June 2015 sampling investigation.

For a year, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District has been addressing environmental issues regarding PCBs. The District has been coordinating with local, state and federal agencies in both the health and education areas to ensure it is providing the most appropriate environmental review in order to address concerns regarding the health and safety of students and staff.

“When these concerns were brought to our attention, we created a task force, began testing and ultimately hired an international environmental engineering firm to help us with all aspects of this issue,” Lyon said. “Our desire from the outset was to make sure our students and staff were safe and that we were taking the appropriate steps as we learned about the situation. The expense has been substantial; however, we have wanted to ensure throughout this process that we are thorough and have the best experts to guide us in decision making.”

As a result of the District’s efforts, District administration has said with confidence that Malibu High School and Juan Cabrillo Elementary are environmentally safe, with tests that have consistently reported PCB levels that were either non-detectable or well below EPA health protective standards. In fact, the EPA has generated three different letters (July 31, Aug. 14, and Oct. 31) supporting the District’s efforts to ensure our schools are safe and clearly stating that SMMUSD is following state and federal laws.

The August 14 letter was very clear: “The District is meeting EPA national guidelines to protect public health from PCBs in schools by addressing the human exposure pathways of greatest concern, namely air, dust and soil.” The letter also addressed questions from District officials and parents about the need for additional testing, stating that “EPA does not recommend additional testing of caulk unless dust or air samples persistently fail to meet EPA’s health-based guidelines.” The letter also noted, “The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) does not require schools or building owners to test caulk for PCBs.”

Based on continuous implementation of the BMP program, in conjunction with the District’s planned removal of PCB-containing caulk per its EPA-approved plan, EPA has determined that conditions at the schools will continue to protect public health and meet the “no unreasonable risk” TSCA standard until building components are removed during school renovation or demolition. The ongoing efficacy of the BMPs and other approved measures will be verified through periodic evaluations, per the SMMUSD plan.

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Editor’s Note: For additional information about ENVIRON’s work with the school district, including testing reports, please [click here](#).