

Date: 12/9/21

Response to BHS questions

A. In general, what do the new School Action Levels (SALs) mean for the BHS project?

Under the new state law, schools will have a full building materials survey to identify potential PCB products present in the school. Indoor air data along with the building survey will be evaluated together so that Health and DEC can interpret data and make recommendations for next steps. BHS did not have a full building materials survey before being tested. The school action levels accompany a testing strategy that groups rooms according to the types of building materials in each room that may contain PCB products. The data collected at BHS cannot be retroactively fit into the testing and data analysis strategy that accompanies the school action levels because these action levels include the grouping methodology. If BHS chooses to do additional work to connect the building materials with indoor air levels, group rooms, and collect more indoor air data, updated BHS results could be analyzed under the SAL framework.

There's extensive contamination of building materials at BHS, and re-occupancy would need to be discussed with EPA. To understand if BHS is regulated differently under the new authority granted by the legislature to DEC, the BHS team and consultants need to work with DEC. It's too soon to say whether we would support the school's decision to return students to any portions of the BHS buildings. The Health Department recommends that levels of PCBs in the indoor air of schools be kept as low as possible.

B. What guidance can VDH and DEC provide to the District regarding occupancy of BHS? In order to determine what is in the best interests of our students, staff and community, we need to know what levels of occupancy will be supported by both departments.

See answer to A

C. Can we occupy more spaces than we are currently occupying and for longer periods? What are the opportunities and/or limits of occupancy?

BHS can submit a revised occupancy plan for DEC and Health to evaluate. The revised occupancy plan should outline which tested and untested rooms would be occupied and number of hours per week, for students and staff. In addition, See answer to A.

D. Considering that our quarterly air testing for continued occupancy has yielded average results at or below 15ng/m³, do we need to continue quarterly monitoring for building A? What are our opportunities and/or limits for reducing or eliminating periodic air testing?

DEC needs to see the final report that details all the indoor air sampling and correlation to building materials, to understand the frequency at which the indoor air sampling should continue. EPA may have additional requirements for continued indoor air monitoring.

E. How will air tests be interpreted under the SALs? In the past, some degree of averaging has been allowed. Will averaging still be allowed?

The results will not be averaged to determine regulatory compliance. The SALs accept a higher level of risk, but they will give schools several occupancy options under the new regulatory framework.

F. Will the agencies provide guidance to Districts and their consultants in developing work plans under the new SALs?

Yes.

G. What is the protocol for the few areas that have tested over 100ng/m³? Do they need to be remediated or can they be “mothballed” or isolated from other spaces?

The school will need to follow the IRULE and prepare a corrective action plan to address the exceedances. One option could be ensuring that access is not allowed, with frequent reporting to DEC and EPA that access is not allowed. Additionally, the school would have to provide data that ensures that the source in the “mothballed” room does not cause indoor air impacts in adjacent rooms. In addition, see answer to A.

H. If the District occupies the buildings what, if any, restrictions or temporary measures will be required in regard to the contaminated soils on campus, especially around the perimeter?

Access or direct contact to contaminated soils above Resident Soil Standards should be restricted until corrective action measures can be implemented.

I. Are the SALs going to be incorporated into the DEC iRule and if so, how will they be used from a regulatory standpoint?

Yes, they will eventually be adopted as a cleanup value for schools.