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dwest@tracecreek.net
rbentley@tracecreek.net
mgrayson@tracecreek.net

Gentlemen:

On November 21, 2016, Steven E. Rice Environmental Inspections performed an environmental assessment at Boyd County Middle School. This school is undergoing a major renovation, scheduled to be completed in November of 2017. Beginning on November 2, 2016 through the current time, eight students have developed an allergic skin rash that seems to get worse when they are in the school building and that seems to get better when they are at home. The affected students have spent time in Room 117, a newly remodeled room and in Room 109 prior to that. The rash is primarily on the chest and back with one student's legs affected. Antihistamine treatment and the application of calamine lotion seem to reduce the severity of the rash. Scratching the itchy rash seems to aggravate the condition. No other significant symptoms are currently reported.

Assessment Protocol:

A detailed history of each student's case was documented including onset date, recurrence dates, rash description, student gender, location of student in the building, concurrent construction activities and other issues that might be contributing to the situation. A thorough inspection of rooms 117, 109 and other areas of the school building was conducted along with interviews with school staff members including the school nurse.

Findings and Associations:

The first case included a report of straw in the student's shirt, suggesting possible straw itch mite exposure. Shared associations included the three week period of rash development and the occupation of room 117. No additional connections or shared conditions were revealed in the investigation.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

1. No construction activities, building materials, or exposures are currently documented as being likely causitive factors of the student rashes. No similar symptoms have been identified in the construction workers thus far.

2. The eight student cases of rash are a small percentage of the similarly exposed entire student population. If the number of cases continues to increase, it may be possible to identify additional shared associations which might lead to the identification of a causitive agent or agents but so far the number of cases are too few to reveal such additional associations.

3. I recommend that Trace Creek Construction, their subcontractors and school officials continue the practices of separation of construction activities from student occupied areas. Maintenance of physical air-tight barriers to control the escape of dusts, odors and other agents from the work areas should continue to be a high priority.
4. I recommend that the separation of areas include the management of the HVAC systems such that circulated air is not shared between construction areas and student occupied areas.

5. I recommend that certain construction activities such as roof work, painting, etc. that are likely to generate odors or dust, be deferred until students are scheduled to be absent from the building.

6. I recommend that the school system continue to carefully monitor the health of students and staff to determine if the rashes are continuing or perhaps other symptoms develop at the school. Please share new findings and perceptions with Steven E. Rice Environmental Inspections as they develop.

Thank you for selecting Steven E. Rice Environmental Inspections for this important service. Please call me with any questions regarding this assessment.

Sincerely,

Steven E. Rice

Steven E. Rice, R.S./E.H.S.
Environmental Inspections