

Indoor PCB Results Public Community Meeting for Rutland Town School-20240103_170350- Meeting Recording

January 3, 2024, 10:03PM

21h 57s

Penkleton, Ellen started transcription

Sarah Tetadell 0:00

OK

Hi everyone

Thank you for those of you that are joining us at this meeting will be recorded.

Mary Adenash joined the meeting

JB joined the meeting

Frank joined the meeting

Karen (Lettorwood Penk) joined the meeting

parent joined the meeting

Sarah Tetadell 0:05

Hi everyone, I'm Sarah Tetadell, principle of Rutland Town school like school.

Chloe joined the meeting

Kristen joined the meeting

Mila Lomera joined the meeting

Holly Gatty joined the meeting

Sarah Taylor joined the meeting

Ruby Sweet joined the meeting

Rich Sweet joined the meeting

Lilla Hughes joined the meeting

Jodi Manning joined the meeting

Any Lubate joined the meeting

b4c4b32-4378-4346-b4b3-4346b32b4d4 joined the meeting

90207191-2443-4278-970a-b423b3122b39 joined the meeting

9020808-0847-442a-b42b-b42b312b39 joined the meeting

57d8b4b-4d70-4346-b42a-b42b312b4d0 joined the meeting

b4c4b32-4378-4346-b4b3-4346b32b4d4 left the meeting

Sarah Tetadell 0:20

Sorry I'm getting some echoing right now.

Mary Adenash 0:22

Sorry

Sarah Tetadell 0:24

Hi everyone

And I appreciate all of you that are attending

I would like to first start with introducing Trish Tapinos, who will introduce others as well and start the presentation on the results of our PCB testing results and next steps.

Joanne joined the meeting

9020808-0847-442a-b42b-b42b312b39 left the meeting

Joanne joined the meeting

Cappoliva, Patricia 0:41

Hi everyone I am happy New Year.

Sorry to be here talking to you about PCBs or detected in your school.

My name is Trish Tapinos.

I'm with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and I'd like to introduce the team of state folks that are joining me here to help with presenting what we were finding I've been.

Any Lubate 1:04

How much air?

Cappoliva, Patricia 1:00

Would you like to introduce yourself?

Penkleton, Ellen 1:00

Hi, I'm Ellen Penkleton.

I'm with the Department of Environmental Conservation as well, and I'm the project manager for Rutland Town School.

Cappoliva, Patricia 1:00

And I'd like to introduce my colleagues from the Department of Health.

Or have them introduce themselves.

Joanne, Sarah 1:00

Hi.

I'm Sarah Joanne.

I'm the state toxicologist at the health department and I'm here with Danielle.

Thanksgiving, Danielle (She/Her) 1:00

Hi, I'm Danielle Penkleton and I am the PCB coordinator at the health department.

Cappoliva, Patricia 1:40

And my colleague JB.

From the Agency of Education.

Any Lubate 1:40

The speaker all these people.

BriggsCampbell, JB 1:40

I'd like to introduce Campbell.

I'm the director of operations for the Agency of Education.

Any Lubate 1:40

Others

Cappoliva, Patricia 1:50

Our plan tonight is to walk you through a brief presentation of the PCB program.

The results that were identified in the school, the next steps and then open the conversation up to questions.

I would ask that if everyone could stay muted, that would be great.

cheryl allman joined the meeting

Cappoliva, Patricia 2:00

You can raise your hands or put questions in the chat and we will answer them as best as we can because it's after the presentation is over.

As I mentioned, my name is Trish Tapinos.

I'm the senior environmental program manager at the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Next slide, Ellen.

We're making sure we all understand what PCBs are, so they stand for polychlorinated biphenyls.

Polychlorinated biphenyls are man-made chemicals.

They were manufactured by Monsanto in the United States.

They were actually the only manufacturers of PCBs in the US.

PCBs are used in or were used in multiple types of building materials in schools.

They were primarily used in.

William McClay joined the meeting

Cappoliva, Patricia 3:00

Cooking paints contains printing materials and spray on fire proofing is where we find most of the PCBs.

When we start looking for them, paints were banned by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in 1979, so they are no longer manufactured.

Longer manufactured PCBs did not break down quickly in the environment and they do persist.

Because of some of the findings at Burlington High School, the Vermont State Legislature mandated that all public and approved independent schools that were built before 1980 needs to be tested for PCBs and indoor air.

Jodi Manning left the meeting

Jodi Manning left the meeting

Joanne, Sarah 4:00

We know that PCBs can affect our health in several different ways and this is the reason that PCBs have gotten so much attention.

They're one of the few chemicals that the EPA has program regulations, and of course, the Vermont legislature required that schools test for these chemicals.

We know the PCB's.

Can increase our risk of getting some types of cancer.

PCBs can cause congenital Malformation.

PCBs can also affect our immune system, reproductive system, nervous system and endocrine system, especially for babies, as they're developing. PCBs have a very long half life in our bodies.

That means it takes a very long time for PCBs to leave our bodies once we're exposed.

When we started the school testing program a couple of years ago, as directed by the legislature, the Health Department and DC worked together to come up with school action levels.

Joanne, Sarah 5:00

And you'll see references throughout the presentation.

To the school action levels are these numbers that represent concentrations of PCBs in the indoor air, and it's an indicator of where there are sources that can be removed in the building or in the room to get those levels to come down.

Joanne, Sarah 5:00

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Joanne, Sarah 5:00

Joanne, Sarah 5:00

Joanne, Sarah 5:00

And then the last thing the school needs to do is to adapt an occupancy strategy related to concentrations that were in the school and continued on.

So the school has determined that they're going to continue to use the school.

Um.

As an designed and um, this decision is supported by Health Department, Department of Environmental Conservation and Agency of Education.

To there won't be any changes to the use of the school moving forward.

I should say, with the exception of some spaces where the school had to be using some classrooms.

This is a rough outline or image for you so you can see how long it takes for this process to be work through.

This is a rough process by any means.

After we identified the PCR's consultant and we'll put together a work plan and conducts building material sampling that goes off to the lab that can take up to six months for us to do that work and get results back.

And after that we have understood where all the PCR's are in the building that are causing the indoor air issues, we move towards corrective action which is removal or or mitigating covering on the PCR's so that we can reduce indoor air to concentrations below the school action levels.

Action levels that can take another 6 plus months on top of that, during the time frame, while we're in evaluating where the PCR's are in the building and taking to remove them, we will be conducting routine indoor air sampling.

To us look at quarterly indoor air sampling so that we can confirm that that air filtration units are working, and that we're not having any exceedances to the school action levels while we're doing the work.

BriggsCampbell, BR joined the meeting.

Coppolino, Patricia 13:03

That is the end of this presentation and we are happy to take any questions that you have.

And then to enter your hand or pop them in the chat and we will go through and answer them.

Yes.

William looking

William McCreay 14:20

Uh, yeah, yeah.

Can you hear me alright?

Coppolino, Patricia 14:40

Yes.

William McCreay 14:41

I missed the very beginning of the presentation because I was.

I'm jumping back to my house, but and maybe you covered it there, but my question is about the newer parts of the school that weren't sampled and I was just curious, in your experience, you know, are those spaces, you know, is there a big difference between the air concentrations there versus the, you know, the parts of the school that we're focused on for the sampling, you know, given that air moves around?

Um, no I just wondered if you could comment on that.

Coppolino, Patricia 15:14

Sure.

Part of what we will do now that we know PCR's are detected is have the consultant work with their facilities person to look at how air moves in the school.

To see if there connected HVAC systems or anything that we need to identify and look at as a potential for air movement and PCR migration to happen?

But it is something that we will look at next.

Even, do you want to maybe post our contact information here?

To people can also email us if they want to.

If they come up, have questions afterwards. Thanks.

Penelitian, Ethan 15:50

Yes.

Coppolino, Patricia 16:20

We don't want to make you any time.

Oh, and happy to answer questions offline later or anything else.

Yeah.

Sarah 16:40

Yeah, I think one LM question that I've gotten from the public that may be helpful.

They're asking about, like, why are you just doing testing instead?

And they know that this was added twice in our facility and staff meeting earlier this afternoon.

And why aren't other municipalities, hospitals and nursing homes?

Um, personal homes built prior to 1979.

They why aren't those being tested?

Why is just schools just in Vermont?

Because there is no other state that is doing this.

So I don't know if maybe you could answer that.

Coppolino, Patricia 17:10

Sure, Um.

Sarah 17:10

Thank you.

Coppolino, Patricia 17:21

To you are correct that Vermont is the first in the nation's program to have the school testing program as a requirement.

The simplest answer and maybe not the most satisfying answer is that currently under Vermont statute, there are regulations put in place that allow the state to require testing of indoor air and PCR's, as well as look at that as a release to the environment.

But it is specific to public and approved independent schools, and anything outside of that is not something that the state has jurisdiction to require.

Helene joined the meeting.

Coppolino, Patricia 18:04

The indoor air sampling is happen.

The state does look at PCR's and soil and groundwater and.

So, for example, water and other buildings where we're looking at disposal, where there are releases.

But right now PCR's and indoor air and the requirement to sample is specific to schools.

Doing.

Ohm, Sarah 18:10

She is muted, it looks like.

Sarah 18:10

Yeah, do you have a question?

And how to ask it.

You can just remove yourself.

James, do you want to type your question in the chat?

And then I look like, uh, Karen Penazzi has a question as well.

Can I let it Karen.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 18:50

Hi, can you hear me?

Coppolino, Patricia 19:04

Yes.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 19:05

Um, I I have history with Rutland Town.

I started teaching there in 2014 and we've had a lot of testing done in '17 and '18 due to a number of teachers diagnosed with cancer in a short period of time.

Seven teachers and seven months and we had all kinds of testing done, Jan Carney who was the Commissioner of Health at the time, had come and worked with our our community.

To have all that been reviewed all the information from the testing back then?

Ohm, Sarah 20:20

Um, I.

I have not seen anything about that testing, so tonight was the first time that I heard about that testing.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 20:30

OK, that's interesting.

Because over the years, we've had probably 14 people diagnosed with cancer that were teachers there and a number of students as well.

Ohm, Sarah 20:40

And for students well.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 20:51

So I'm just curious if Sarah, do you know where any of that information is?

Sarah 20:51

I'm not sure where any of that is.

I talked to some other teachers that have been here as well that mentioned previous school board members that may have had that.

But Karen, you mentioned the health Commissioner.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 20:56

Yes.

Sarah 20:57

Who was that?

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 20:59

Jan Carney at the time and I have a whole file of all the a lot of testing results and things only because I was personally affected when my husband died of cancer.

He was one of the teachers.

So and we had done all kinds of air quality water, soil on the whole lot.

And we've just done indoor PCR's weren't identified then, but they are now.

This was back, so I said in the old file.

Sarah 21:00

That was a question earlier too, Sarah, that that we had at our staff meeting.

Ohm, Sarah 21:00

And.

To yeah, I was going to ask if maybe you could connect me with Janine.

Doctor Carney is no longer at the health department.

We may have records somewhere, but I might be quicker for me to connect with Janine and see what you have in terms of records.

As far as why testing wasn't done for PCR's at that time, it's a good question.

My guess is they looked at some early basic indicators of air quality.

Or maybe you know, I think we have to look through the records, but PCR's have been, you know, they're recognized as basic chemicals.

And I have known for many years that they've been in building materials, but there's been, I think it's been a difficult situation for many states to figure out how to address because of the knowledge that they are in probably so many different building materials.

Helene left the meeting.

heli joined the meeting.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 22:50

Sarah, I'd like to bring it's Karen.

Can I bring up what I have to you.

So you can make copies of it and then maybe you guys can review that.

Sarah 22:52

Yeah, that would be great.

And I don't know where those files are.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 23:08

They were either on the back of the library or in the principal's office, or no assistant principal's office.

I'm office, but that was again, you know, many years.

Sarah 23:14

There.

Yeah, they're they're not in either of the offices admin offices now.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 23:18

Also.

OK.

OK, well I do have a lot of information.

I'll bring that up in the next couple of days.

Sarah 23:27

That would be great.

Yeah.

Whatever you have and then I'll just send it to Karen.

Do I just send it to you? OK.

Karen Sattermead Penazzi 23:34

Thank you.

Ohm, Sarah 23:34

I'll probably better if you connect directly with me.

So, even, can you connect us with email just cause with sharing some of that, it might be better to just go directly to health, OK.

Penelitian, Ethan 23:42

Yeah, yeah.

Yeah, I'll text.

Send you Sarah.

I'll send you Sarah's contact information so.

Coppolino, Patricia 24:03

Parvith, you have a question?

Sarah 24:05

There does seem a question in the chat from Janine.

So she wasn't able, she said.

Any tolerance levels that Vermont established the same as the EPA's?

Ohm, Sarah 24:10

Uh, no EPA doesn't have regulatory levels.

EPA has guidance levels and they are different from Vermont's.

I've used the same process, so we used the exact same equations.

The same approach in terms of looking at background exposure, one of the big differences is that EPA looked at average exposure to students and staff.

So they looked at someone who's in the building for six hours a day.

Um, in Vermont, we always used a maximum exposure scenario.

A reasonable maximum exposure.

To think about the staff member or the student who's there, and after school programs.

And so our exposure time during each day is longer.

It's about 12 hours, so that's one of the big differences.

The EPA levels are not very far off from Vermont's levels, though.

They're, but they're very close, especially in our immediate action levels.

I can answer part of the question.

Is there anything we should do for the kids and staff right now, testing concerns, elevated?

If the question is about blood testing, we don't recommend blood testing for PCR's because we know that we are all exposed to PCR's, so PCR's are common in our diet.

In our diet, if you see your blood for PCR's you will find it and it's not going to tell you if the PCR's were from school or from your diet.

Your diet and what doesn't give a healthcare provider helpful information.

So it's not like a cholesterol test where a healthcare provider can look at your level and understand what that means for risk.

Ohm, do you want to answer the rest of the question?

Cappelluto, Patricia 25:14

Related to the testing piece, the schools already or working on getting the air purifiers ordered.

So we'll have those put in and then we'll have the consultant tomorrow night afterwards to look at reductions and confirm that the air sampling or the air filters are working.

And then we will continue to sample quarterly to make sure that we have reduced indoor air concentrations in this.

I'm not going to make you all stay here.

I know you all are scrambling to get done with work and start the next part of your evening like most of us are.

Also, I would say feel free to email us and look at our website if you have other questions we want to make sure we're getting you the answers you need.

Chris left the meeting.

Cappelluto, Patricia 27:23

Feel free to reach out to Sarah and she can definitely get a question to us as well, and we can get them back to you and we'll make sure that we're being as open and transparent as we can through this process and that you get all the information you need.

And I guess you know, have a great evening.

Thank you for joining and listening and take care.

9037975-2465-4274-5704-543255442254 left the meeting.

Penetration, then stopped transcription.

