

Q. Why did FCS ask for testing in March?

A. As advised, FCS tested this March as a follow up to testing this past summer. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management's Vapor Intrusion Guidance calls for sub-slab sampling in summer worst case and winter worst case. The March event satisfied the winter worst case and was the most conservative time of the winter season to test.

Q. What test was conducted on March 9th?

A. Sub-Slab vapor testing. This means that air samples were taken from under the concrete floor in each building. IDEM's Vapor Intrusion Guidance calls for sub-slab sampling to determine whether there is a need to test indoor air.

Q. What did the sub-slab testing results tell FCS?

A. On March 20, FCS learned that results in three out of seven sub-slab samples at Webb Elementary and two out of 10 sub-slab samples at Needham Elementary were above the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's (IDEM) screening levels. These results indicated we need to take the next step in IDEM's Vapor Intrusion Guidance which is testing the indoor air quality to see whether or not vapors are getting through the concrete floor to the air that we breathe inside of the building. IDEM has cautioned us not to view the sub-slab screening levels as health-based screening levels since people are not exposed to sub-slab vapors. Sub-slab sample screening levels are intended solely to determine whether it is necessary to test indoor air.

Q. Why was there an E-Learning Day before spring break?

A. Upon receiving the results of sub-slab samples on the afternoon of March 20, Dr. Clendening and his team decided to use an E-Learning Day that Thursday, March 21 out of an abundance of caution and to have time to determine what the sub-slab results meant for next steps. This also allowed EnviroForensics another day to get started on additional testing.

Q. What is a Summa canister?

A. A Summa canister is a stainless steel, air-tight container used to collect air samples. They are emptied of all contents by the laboratory to create a vacuum in the canister to prepare them for use in gathering a sample. The valve is specially designed to take a sample drawn over a set period of time that could be a few minutes to 24 hours. Once the sample is collected in the canister it is returned to the laboratory for analysis. Air sampling using Summa canisters is the standard testing methodology recommended by EPA and IDEM and the most common method of collecting air samples.

Q. EnviroForensics stated that there were 44 indoor air samples that came back non-detect. What does this mean?

A. Non-detect means the lab did not detect PCE or TCE in any of the 44 indoor air samples.

Q. Is the air outside safe to breathe when students are outside for recess?

A. Yes. This is one of the questions FCS posed to EnviroForensics and IDEM when determining next steps. Both indicated that contaminant vapors in the top couple of feet of soil typically dilute and disperse through the air movement caused by variations in barometric pressure. As a result, contaminants venting to the outside air from the soil disperse quickly. Additionally, Enviroforensics collected an 8-hour and 24-hour ambient air sample outside each school at the same time the indoor air samples were taken. This is a standard practice for indoor air sampling to provide information on how chemicals detected in the outside air may be contributing to chemicals detected in the indoor air samples. The laboratory did not detect PCE or TCE in any of the four outside air samples.

Q. Are there harmful levels of PCE or TCE in the soil outside that students could come into contact with during recess?

A. FCS posed this question to EnviroForensics and IDEM when determining next steps. PCE and TCE are very volatile and do not persist in the top couple of feet of soil. Further, there are no indications of a spill or other source of soil contamination on the school properties. The detected concentrations of PCE and TCE are most likely migrating deeper in the subsurface from an off-site source (another facility). IDEM and the City of Franklin are investigating utility conduits as a potential pathway.

Q. Where can I find results and information from all sampling conducted at Needham Elementary and Webb Elementary.

A. On the FCS website www.franklinschools.org/operations, you can click on 'school safety' then 'environmental study'. More recent information is posted on the front page at www.franklinschools.org

Q. If my child missed school on Monday, April 1st, so that I could attend the parent meeting first, will that be an unexcused absence.

A. No. The absence will be excused and your child will be able to make up his/her work.

Q. What if I want to transfer my child to another FCS school?

A. Please request an Intra District Transfer form from your child's current school. Complete the form and return it to the Administration Building (contact information is on the form.)

Q. Are IDEM's indoor air screening levels protective of children?

A. Yes, IDEM's residential indoor air screening levels for TCE and PCE are protective of children. They are calculated based on a 26-year exposure period. Due to differences in the compounds, the calculations for TCE account for childhood exposures including ages 0 to 2, 2 to 6, 6 to 16, and 16 to 26; and calculations for PCE account for childhood exposures including 0 to 6, and 6 to 26. The screening levels are calculated assuming exposure for 24 hours per day, 350 days per year, for 26 years - greatly overestimating the typical exposure to make sure the screening levels are conservative and protective.