



November 4, 2020
J5174-04-01

Worcester Public Schools
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609, MA 02035

Attn.: Ms. Kristen Tran,
Environmental Health & Safety Coordinator

RE: PCB BMP Quarterly Status Report, 2020-2021 School Year
First Quarter, September 2020
Burncoat High School

Dear Kristen,

In accordance with the Worcester Public School's (WPS) authorization, O'Reilly Talbot & Okun Associates, Inc. (OTO) is pleased to present this quarterly status report of the Best Management Practices (BMPs) implemented at the Burncoat High School (Burncoat). This status report represents the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year. The objective of the BMP program is to reduce potential exposures to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

Certain materials used in the construction and renovation of buildings between 1950 and 1980 may contain PCBs. Burncoat High School was constructed during this period. The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has recommended that a BMP program be implemented in schools and other buildings either constructed or renovated during this period.

WPS and its staff are responsible for implementing the BMPs at Burncoat High School. OTO is responsible for conducting quarterly independent evaluations to provide WPS management with an assessment of the effectiveness of the BMPs implementation.

Best Management Practices (BMPs)

In its July 28, 2015 guidance for school administrators and other building owners and managers titled "Practical Actions for Reducing Exposure to PCBs in Schools and Other Buildings," the USEPA described potentially useful BMPs, including:

1. Ensuring that ventilation systems are operating properly and are regularly inspected and maintained according to system manufacturer instructions and guidelines or ANSI/ASHRAE/ACCA Standard 180-2012—Standard Practice for Inspection and Maintenance of Commercial Building HVAC

- Systems. If system cleaning is needed, follow ANSI/ACCA Standard 6– Restoring the Cleanliness of HVAC Systems (2007);
2. Cleaning inside schools and other buildings frequently to reduce dust and residue;
 3. Using a wet or damp cloth or mop to clean surfaces;
 4. Using vacuum cleaners with high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters;
 5. Not sweeping with dry brooms or using dry cloth wipes for dusting;
 6. Washing hands with soap and water, particularly before eating; and
 7. Washing children’s toys.

We understand that WPS has modeled its BMP program for Burncoat High School on EPA’s guidelines. OTO’s assessment of BMP effectiveness focuses on items 1 through 5 on this list. Regarding item 6, all school lavatories are equipped with soap and water and it is the responsibility of students and staff to maintain personal cleanliness. Item 7 on the list is not relevant to high school environments.

Assessment of BMPs at Burncoat High School

We conducted the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year BMP assessment at Burncoat on September 24, 2020 accompanied by representatives from the District and School environmental and facilities department. The Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) system underwent a significant overhaul approximately 3 years ago and was operating properly at the time of the BMP assessment.

Because window and door caulking in the School may contain PCBs, WPS has previously applied a layer of non-PCB caulk over the previously existing caulking to reduce the potential for exposures. OTO observed twenty-two (22) classrooms or other representative spaces in the school selected at random during the assessment. Our observations focused on the presence of dust on windows, windowsills and window frames as well as the univent systems that provide heating and ventilation to the classrooms. As noted in Table 1, some windowsills were obstructed by classroom items or other materials.

The school spaces we observed included:

- Administration and Guidance offices, and
- Selected classrooms.

Our general observations are summarized on Table 1 (attached). During the assessment we observed small amounts of missing caulk that we identified at the time to District and School facilities representatives.

Based on our discussions and observations, it is our conclusion that the implementation of the BMPs at Burncoat is effective. The univents were generally free of significant dust and visible oil leakage. Except as noted above, most rooms exhibited only slight accumulation of dust.

Note that WPS has also authorized OTO to conduct annual indoor air monitoring for PCBs at Burncoat. The full air testing reports are provided separately from the BMP reports, although we note that the air monitoring results have been well below USEPA guidelines for PCB concentrations in school air for each of the sampling rounds completed to date.

Other USEPA Recommendations for Suspected PCBs in Schools

Although not technically BMPs, USEPA made three other recommendations in its July 28, 2015 guidance for PCBs in schools:

- Remove all PCB containing fluorescent light ballasts (FLBs);
- Give consideration to encapsulating suspected PCB containing materials (such as caulk) to further reduce the potential for PCB exposure; and
- Removing suspect PCB containing building materials during planned renovations and repairs.

WPS removed all suspect PCB containing FLBs in 2012. There are no suspected PCB FLBs remaining in the Worcester school system.

In 2012 WPS also encapsulated the suspect PCB containing caulk around all of the windows and doors at Burncoat with an additional thick layer of non-PCB caulk. Exterior suspect caulking was likewise covered with new caulk to a height of eight feet above grade. WPS subsequently over-caulked the remainder of the building's exterior door, window, and expansion joints in September and October 2018. This over-caulking is repaired as needed to maintain its condition.


Finally, it is noted that WPS has applied to the state sponsored school building financing program for help with the replacement of the Burncoat High School building. It is estimated that the current building will be replaced in approximately seven years. When Burncoat is replaced, the suspect PCB containing materials will be removed and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, it is our opinion that the BMPs are being implemented in an effective manner at Burncoat High School. We recommend that the next quarterly on-site visit be conducted December of 2020.

Should you have questions or require additional information, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,
O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun Associates, Inc.


Christine Arruda, CIEC
Project Manager


Robert Kirchherr, CSP
Principal


James Okun, LSP

Attachments Table 1 – Summary of Observations for Burncoat High School

CC Mr. James Bedard,
Director of Environmental Management and Capital Projects

Table 1 - Summary of BMP Observations
 Burncoat High School
 179 Burncoat Street
 Worcester, MA 01602
 September 24, 2020

Room	Condition of Caulk	Condition of Univents	Dust Accumulation	Comments
Main Administrative Office (open area)	VG	VG	VG	
A6	VG	VG	VG	
A16	VG	VG	VG	
B4	VG	VG	VG	
B2	VG	VG	VG	4th window from right, bottom sill, 6" caulk missing. 3rd window from left, bottom sill, 6" caulk missing.
B9	VG	VG	VG	
B3	VG	VG	VG	
B1	VG	VG	VG	
B14	VG	VG	VG	
Hallway to C-Wing	VG	VG	VG	4th window set from left, middle pane, left seam, 3 1/2" caulk missing. 5th window from left, middle pane, bottom pane, 3" caulk missing.
C9	VG	VG	VG	
C4	VG	VG	VG	
C8	VG	VG	VG	
C21	VG	VG	VG	
E2	VG	VG	VG	
E3	VG	VG	VG	Some obstructions on window sill.
E5	VG	VG	VG	
F4	VG	VG	VG	
Gym Lobby Hall	VG	VG	VG	1st window on left, middle pane, left seam, 6" caulk missing.
D24	VG	VG	VG	
D16	VG	VG	VG	
D4	VG	VG	VG	
D6A	VG	VG	VG	Window sills covered with millboard, with seams caulked to surrounding materials. Millboard subject to varying degrees of moisture/water damage, and are warped, resulting in deteriorating and tearing caulk.

CATEGORIZATION

Very good = minimal dust or debris

Little = enough dust to leave a residue on a gloved finger

Moderate = visible accumulations of dust

Significant = thick layer of dust