

Adelaide Avenue Environmental Justice Coalition
60 Crescent Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02907

September 11, 2007

Mr. Alan Sepe
Acting Director
Department of Public Buildings
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Adelaide Avenue School – 30 July 2007 Air Sampling Event
Community Response- TCE indoor air Concentrations

Dear Mr. Sepe:

On behalf of the Providence Department of Public Property (**City**), EA Engineering, Science and Technology, Inc. (**EA**) has provided the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (**RIDEM**) with the most recent TO-15 air sampling results for the Adelaide Avenue School (**School**). The samples were retrieved from the Site during a sampling event completed on July 30, 2007. This was the first sampling round completed at the site in accordance with the new schedule mandated by the RIDEM's most recent Amended Order-2 (AO-2) issued on July 26, 2007. As has been the case previously, your engineers and consultants submitted their report, which includes tables summarizing data and indicating indoor air exceedences, figures illustrating sampling locations, and copies of the analytical reports for the abovementioned sampling event. Included below are some thoughts and concerns from the community relevant to your most recent sampling event:

- The indoor air collected during this sampling event was held in their respective containers for eleven days before being measured. They were collected on July 30th and analyzed by Alfa Woods Hole Labs, of Mansfield Ma, on August 10th. Upon closer review of the historical sampling data EA Engineering has submitted for this project, it appears summa sampling canisters that went unsampled for more than a week lost 36% of some VOC concentrations.

Included in those VOCs with measurable loss were VOCs of concern for this site. Please verify that the samples for the Adelaide Avenue School are representative of the indoor air environment of our children's classrooms. It was also noticed that the samples have gone out to the labs without being preserved by any industry standard chilling device. Does this mean the sample canisters sit in the laboratory at room temperature until being tested eleven days later?

- If one were to assume that the vapor loss historically encountered in older samples (a week or more) has impacted these most recent samples, then there are additional exceedences to tabulate in your "Summary of Indoor Air Sampling Data" chart; to date, included with each subsequent Order of Approval Compliance Letter to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (**RIDEM**).
- On that point, without any corrections or adjustments being made, the Trichloroethylene (**TCE**) indoor air result from Room 118 was recorded at concentrations of 1.0 ug/m³, an exceedence of the residential indoor air criteria for the school. Within the format established by your consultants, indoor air exceedences have been included in a "comparison table". Please revise the "Summary of Indoor Air Sampling Data" and resubmit the table to the RIDEM so they can correct your Order of Approval Compliance Follow-Up Letter, posted on the department's web site; viewed by many in the community as the only source of accurate information available. The TCE concentration recorded in Room 118 is an exceedence, and needs to be recorded as such.
- The City's consultants at EA Engineering, and specifically Tim Regan proclaimed in October of 2005, shortly after their final soil vapor tests (*less than 5 ug/m³ of TCE*) that these were the prevailing conditions they anticipated and will design their systems for our new school accordingly. now and in the future. Tim is often quoted as saying, "*The depressurization system we are installing at the Adelaide Avenue School is state of the art, simply state of the art...*" Let's all hope and pray this assessment is completely accurate. The early indicators from preliminary sub-slab soil vapor test results directly under the abandoned Stop & Shop indicate concentrations of Trichloroethylene (TCE) over 365,000 times the acceptable indoor air standard for any building that would be occupied in the state of Rhode Island. These results are so much higher than what EA Engineering ever suggested was possible on this site that it is difficult to comprehend.

The community is hopeful that your consultants will be more conscientious in the future; and expedite the air sampling retrieval and analytical processing time. It is also imperative there be no question concerning the integrity of the City of Providence's test results for the Adelaide Avenue High School.

This must be a mandate for the present and future health of the many children who will attend the new facility built on the inadequately characterized site of the yet unremediated former Textron/Gorham Manufacturing Facility.

Sincerely,

Adelaide Avenue Environmental Justice Coalition

cc:

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Joseph T. Martella II, RIDEM/OWM
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