



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street • San Francisco, CA 94105

September 2015

Rainbow Montessori Child Development Center Sunnyvale, California

Dear Teachers:

We are sending this letter to update you on the trichloroethene (TCE) indoor air testing that is being conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at your school. This work is associated with the long-term groundwater cleanup in the neighborhood.

EPA is working diligently to ensure that your classrooms are being protected from any chemicals of concern in the groundwater under the school. Our sampling shows evidence of chemicals in the indoor air at Rainbow Montessori, indicating that the phenomenon called vapor intrusion may be occurring. We have worked with the school administration to improve the ventilation systems as a temporary measure – our testing confirms that supplying outdoor air to the classrooms maintains acceptable air quality for the children and teachers. We are continuing to investigate to better understand the issue, in addition to looking for similar chemicals commonly found in cleaning products, art supplies, etc. In the meantime, we are conducting monthly air testing throughout the school and designing permanent solutions for the Rainbow Montessori buildings.

What You Can Do To Help

To continue providing fresh air, it is important that the ventilation system operates throughout the school day. Operation of the ventilation system is important for maintaining acceptable air quality. If you observe that the ventilation system is off, then you should promptly report that the system is off by calling Dave Rodenborn at (510) 565-6186.

TCE and Vapor Intrusion

The main chemical of concern in this area of Sunnyvale is TCE. TCE can move as a vapor from groundwater up through soil under certain conditions. If vapors move under a building, it is possible for them to pass through cracks and other openings in the foundation and enter the indoor air. If this happens, and if the levels are high enough and prolonged enough, it may create a health risk.

Note: Your drinking water is not affected by this contamination. Drinking water in this area of Sunnyvale comes from the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

Contact For More Information

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (415) 972-3050 or by e-mail to morash.melanie@epa.gov if you have any questions. You may also contact EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator, Alejandro Diaz, at (415) 972-3242 or by e-mail to diaz.alejandro@epa.gov.

EPA also has a website for the project: www.epa.gov/region9/triplesite which has additional information.

Sincerely,

Melanie Morash, EPA Project Manager

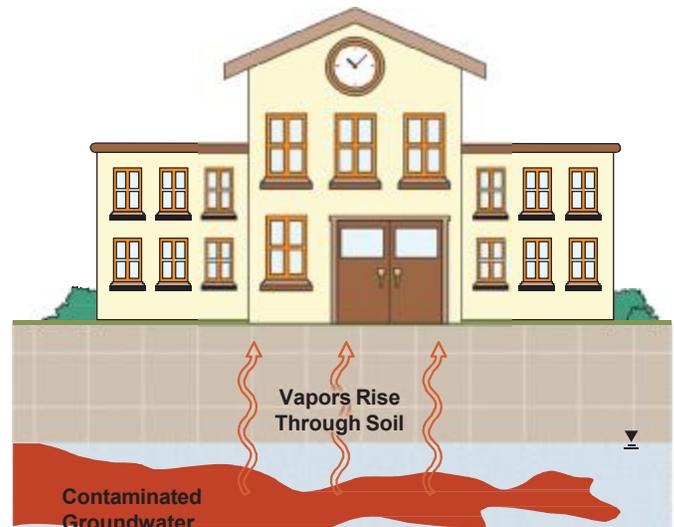


Figure: Vapor intrusion into a building