

**** FACT SHEET ****

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Collaborative Study in Philadelphia Elementary Schools

NIOSH has had a successful collaboration with the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers Health & Welfare Fund & Union (PFTHWFU) on the implementation of the NIOSH Dampness and Mold Assessment Tool over the past 3 years. The Tool includes a form and software that are used to assess damage, mold and dampness in schools. Working with the SDP and the PFTHWFU, NIOSH customized the software specifically for use in the SDP, and has provided a significant support role in the assessment of over 196 schools in the District, including spot surveys conducted post hurricane Sandy.

During this time, the school district staff has asked for more detailed recommendations on interpretation of scores from school assessments in relation to health risks for students and staff. Such recommendations would help to better prioritize the use of resources for repair and maintenance. This led us to plan a study, which was approved and funded by NIOSH, which would help in the development of such recommendations. Plans for study design and implementation have been discussed with both SDP and PFTHWFU staff on several occasions, and a significant amount of personnel and financial resources have been expended to date. Programming of the Internet Questionnaire and modification to the NDMAT software is complete. NIOSH Human Subjects Review Board Clearance is complete and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval is pending. Plans were underway to begin the health and environmental surveys in May of 2014.

We have three aims for the project:

1. To provide school districts with tools to collect and analyze both environmental and health data in order to support needs of appropriate and timely renovation and maintenance.
2. To investigate associations between health data and scores from the NIOSH Dampness and Mold Assessment Tool in order to provide recommendations on interpretations of these scores.
3. To provide validation of data collected with the NIOSH Dampness and Mold Assessment Tool using microbial measurements in environmental samples.

This study will be completed by administering an internet-based questionnaire to school employees and assessing dampness and mold at 50 elementary schools. Employees will receive an invitation email which contains study and consent information, questionnaire instructions, and a link and unique study identification number to securely access the questionnaire on the CDC website. No names or identification numbers will be asked. All 50 schools will be assessed using the NIOSH Dampness and Mold Assessment Tool and approximately 10 floor dust samples will be collected from each school. The sampling sites will be chosen to cover a wide range of room dampness and mold scores. All data collected for this project will be stored on a secure CDC server and maintained according to the CDC record schedule. It was agreed that only summary health data would be reported back to the SDP and PFTHWFU and all environmental data would be provided.