



TO Bennington State Office Building Stakeholder Team

FROM: Cort Lohff, MD
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THROUGH: Charlie Gingo, Agency of Human Services
Bennington District Field Director

RE: Follow-up Health Survey of Relocated Workers

DATE: August 2, 2007

Background

In early June 2006, the Vermont Department of Health began an investigation of health concerns among occupants of the Bennington State Office Building. The primary health concern was identified as sarcoidosis. A health survey of employees who worked 20 or more hours in the building was conducted during the month of August 2006.

On October 5, 2006 the Vermont Department of Health presented its *Interim Report on the Investigation into Health Concerns Among Occupants of the Bennington State Office Building*. Results from the health survey found higher than expected rates of sarcoidosis, asthma and asthma-like symptoms among building occupants. A visual inspection of the building found evidence of past water damage and environmental sampling found evidence of fungi and endotoxin.

Although there was no conclusive evidence to link health concerns with the building itself, the Health Department recommended extensive diagnostic work for the building – and relocation of all employees while the diagnostics and likely renovations are being done. At that time, the Health Department also planned to repeat the health survey and pulmonary function testing before employees moved back into the building and again six months after moving back.

Repeat Health Survey

Health Department staff are working with Charlie Gingo and staff to schedule a repeat of the health survey (questionnaire) for workers at the Bennington State Office Complex. We plan to conduct the survey during late August or early September. This is approximately the same time of year as the initial survey and six months after employees were relocated.

The purpose of the survey is to reassess the health of employees as a group. Results of this year's survey will be analyzed and compared with results from the first survey to see if any changes have occurred. All employees of the Bennington State Office Complex who currently work 20 hours or more per week are invited and encouraged to take part in the survey. This includes people who did not take the survey last year. Because the analysis will be more valid if people who took the first survey also take the repeat survey, we hope to have full participation.

Details are being finalized and will be shared soon. Preliminary results of the repeat survey should be available approximately one month after all the surveys have been completed, and a report with full analysis some time later.

At this time, we do not plan to repeat the pulmonary (lung) function tests offered by NIOSH last year.