



News Release

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Corps of Engineers removes asbestos at Savoy Elementary School, officials close school until cleanup is finished

Baltimore – As part of the DC Public Schools Capital Improvement Program, the boilers at Savoy Elementary School are being replaced. On April 30, while demolishing an old boiler in preparation for a new replacement boiler, a contractor, W.M. Schlosser of Hyattsville, Md., inadvertently released asbestos fibers from an inaccessible area. The room where the boiler is located was abated for asbestos prior to the start of work. The contractor sampled for asbestos prior to beginning demolition and the results were negative. Corps officials are investigating the incident to ensure all safety and protocol procedures were properly followed in connection with this work.

According to Corps officials, as soon as an industrial hygienist identified the asbestos material, all work was halted in the school. Air samples were taken, and the results showed an elevated level of asbestos in a portion of the building. The building has been closed until the affected areas can be cleaned and tested, and sample results indicate it is safe for students to return. Cleanup activities are under way and officials estimate this work will take two days.

As a safety precaution, DCPS and Corps officials decided this morning to close the school on Tuesday. DCPS officials will decide later today if students will attend a nearby elementary school for Wednesday classes.

“The safety of students and improving facilities remains our primary goal and that of the superintendent,” said Col. Charles J. Fiala, Jr. “Because of our excellent partnership with the DC Schools, I’m confident we will address all concerns at Savoy Elementary School and continue to execute the facilities improvement program.”

In 1998, the DC Public Schools requested assistance from the Corps of Engineers to complete their facilities improvement program.