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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Vermont School Superintendents, Independent School Heads, Business Managers and Facilities Managers

**From:** Secretary Julie Moore, Agency of Natural Resources Secretary

**Cc:** Secretary Zoie Saunders, Agency of Education

**Date:** July 1, 2024

**Re:** PCBs School Testing Program Update

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### PCB Legislative Update

In this legislative session, H. 873 proposed to pause Vermont's PCB testing program when the State reached \$4 million or less in the Education Fund for PCB remediation. Ultimately, the legislation did not pass. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Agency of Education (AOE) will continue the PCB testing program with the remaining funding, gradually reducing the scope of the program responsibly until sufficient funding is secured.

### PCB Funding and Prioritization for SFY25 (July 2024 – June 2025)

Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Secretary Julie Moore presented the House Education Committee with a [revised funding and prioritization approach](#) to the PCB testing program. The adjustments in the program consider available funding, capacity of state and school staff, availability of environmental consulting, and laboratory services. Key elements of that approach include:

- **Testing**
  - DEC identified 324 schools built or renovated before 1980 that require PCB testing, consistent with Act 185.
  - There are sufficient funds to test up to 161 schools and maintain an adequate reserve for mitigation and cleanup activities. 151 schools have already been tested.
  - Based on available funding, the PCBs in schools program will be shifting its focus away from testing new schools and prioritizing support for those schools with emissions identified in testing to this point.
- **Funding beginning July 1, 2024**
  - DEC will pay to conduct inventories, complete indoor air sampling, *and* will now also pay to conduct building material sampling, evaluate cleanup alternatives, and develop plans to remediate schools. DEC will pay for this work under existing contracts and schools will no longer be required to enter into consulting contracts.
  - AOE funds will be used to conduct mitigation and remediation efforts, including the purchase of activated carbon units, through the reimbursement model for DEC-approved costs.

- Schools currently under a contract to perform material sampling, evaluate cleanup alternatives, and develop plans to remediate should continue under that contract. You should consult with the State project manager on a logical time to transition from your current contractor to the State contractor. Every effort will be made to keep your existing environmental consultant.
- **PCB cleanup priorities**
  - Schools with primary spaces above the Immediate Action Level (IAL);
  - Schools with primary spaces above the School Action Level (SAL) where mitigation was not successful;
  - Schools with primary spaces above the SAL;
  - Schools with ancillary spaces above the IAL; and
  - Schools with ancillary spaces above the SAL.

If you have completed a school inventory a project manager will be reaching out to you to let you know whether you will be proceeding with testing this year.

If you have been tested and have questions about where you fit in this priority scheme, please reach out to the DEC project manager who has been assigned to your school.

### **Additional Funding and Future Cleanup Plans**

The ANR and AOE are currently in the process of examining different approaches to fund the PCB testing and cleanup program through its completion. Schools that have either not been prioritized for cleanup or have not been tested will receive state funding and assistance to address PCBs as a part of the full funding of the PCB testing program.