



Analytics

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RE: Are Delaware school children and teachers being exposed to airborne toxins?

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Delaware's public schools may have health threatening levels of mold. Vendor contract data from Caesar Rodney's Delaware Spends website makes it appear that the state may be stonewalling on the issue, possibly putting students, teachers and staff at risk.

In 2002 an employee of Batta Environmental Associates, a Delaware industrial hygienist company, asserted that Delaware's public schools are "full of mold." Subsequently, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) inquires from concerned citizens regarding the mycotoxin "air sampling" test results went to state officials, including the Department of Public Health's Chief Toxicologist, Dr. Gerald Llewellyn.

The inquiries were met with either official denials of the test documents' existence, or referrals to Dr. Llewellyn's "Air Assessment Reports." Dr. Llewellyn's reports do not measure mycotoxin spores within the air/surfaces of a particular building. In fact, Dr. Llewellyn measures mold using his eyes and nose only, and does not use any instrument test of air quality.

Vendor transactions data from Caesar Rodney Institute's "Delaware Spends" website show that the state has paid for scientific testing for mold at some of Delaware's schools. In 2006, Batta Environmental Associates had 61 contracts with four school districts (Red Clay, Colonial, Capital, and Indian River) totaling almost \$313,000.

In the face of 61 contracts in one year from a single industrial hygienist firm, it is puzzling that state officials, including the Chief Toxicologist, can find no records of the resulting reports. Perhaps there has just been miscommunication.

Since the state has recently opened up the FOIA process, the Caesar Rodney Institute will submit requests for the results of each of Batta's 61 contracts. Hopefully this will put any concern among citizens to rest.

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