Lashway, Lisa

From: Lashway, Lisa
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2013 3:23 PM
To: Canning, Sean
Cc: Masser, Michelle
Subject: FW: Revised Health Commissioner Asks Mayors to Help Promote Cleanup Precautions Mold & Asbestos Dangers can be Minimized

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From: NJLM to Municipal Officials [mailto:njlm-clerks@cityconnections.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2013 3:15 PM
To: Lashway, Lisa
Subject: Revised Health Commissioner Asks Mayors to Help Promote Cleanup Precautions Mold & Asbestos Dangers can be Minimized

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February 14, 2013

REVISED FOR MOLD RESOURCES LINK BELOW

Re: Health Commissioner Asks Mayors to Help Promote Cleanup Precautions Mold and Asbestos Dangers Can Be Minimized

Dear Mayor:

As Hurricane Sandy cleanup and recovery continues, New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Mary E. O'Dowd wants mayors and municipal officials to be part of a statewide public awareness campaign by reminding community volunteers, homeowners, business owners,

contractors and other recovery workers to protect their health by wearing gloves, masks, boots, protective eyewear and respirators and getting a tetanus booster.

Mold is common in homes and businesses damaged by Hurricane Sandy. To determine if mold is present in a home or business, examine the walls, ceilings and floors for signs of water damage. Mold can also be recognized by a musty, earthy smell or foul stench.

Exposure to mold can cause nasal and throat irritation, coughing or wheezing, eye irritation, or, in some cases, skin irritation. People with mold allergies may have more severe reactions. Immune-compromised people and individuals with chronic lung illnesses, such as obstructive lung disease, may get serious infections in their lungs when they are exposed to mold.

Community volunteers, homeowners, business owners, first responders, recovery workers and contractors and their employees should wear gloves, masks, protective eye wear and boots. You should also get a tetanus booster. Individuals should also wear an appropriate respirator, wash hands and other areas of the skin that come in contact with debris and take frequent breaks and remain hydrated.

The Department has developed a brochure for volunteers, community organizations, and home and businesses owners on how to identify mold and asbestos; and steps that can be taken to protect against these health hazards. The flyer is available at: www.state.nj.us/health/er/documents/prepare_before_cleanup_flyer.pdf

Additional tips for remaining safe while doing repairs:

- Do not enter a building if it is unstable or there are potential hazards
- Do not mix any chemicals together
- Avoid contact with flood water, silt or mud that may contain organic chemicals, pesticides or raw sewage
- Do not apply chemicals to surfaces to kill mold and bacteria without wearing gloves, masks, protective eye wear and boots

If mold is identified, the following preventive steps should be taken while cleaning:

- Open windows and doors when you use bleach
- Mix no more than 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water
- After disposing of moldy sheet rock and insulation, wash the remaining wall with bleach and water, then rinse with clean water and let the area dry
- Never mix bleach with ammonia or other cleaners
- Scrub mold of hard surfaces with laundry or dish detergent and

water, and dry completely so mold does not grow back

Another health hazard recovery workers need to be aware of is asbestos. Asbestos is extremely hazardous. Even small amounts of asbestos can cause serious illness or death years after exposure. Asbestos is a common building material so everyone who is removing walls or other parts of homes damaged by Hurricane Sandy should be cautious and determine if asbestos is present prior to removal.

To find out if a home contains asbestos, homeowners should contract with a professional asbestos inspector certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct an inspection and take samples of any suspect asbestos-containing material. Removal of any asbestos, or demolition of a home that potentially contains asbestos, must be done in accordance with local, state, and federal rules.

Information about disposing of asbestos-containing material is available at www.state.nj.us/health/iep/documents/abestos_disposing_by_sandy.pdf.

Homeowners or businesses with questions about mold or asbestos should contact the Department's Consumer, Environmental and Occupational Health Service Office at 609-826-4920 or 4950.

Additional health and safety resources are available to assist people in their cleanup efforts:

www.nj.gov/health/er/hurricane_recovery_resources.shtml.

www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/cleanup/facts.asp.

Mold resources are available at:

http://nj.gov/health/er/documents/get-rid-of-mold-eng.pdf

http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/mold/protect.asp

Information on asbestos is available by visiting:

www.state.nj.us/health/iep/documents/asb_in_home.pdf

www.epa.gov/asbestos/learn-about-asbestos.html#find

"Be Sure to Prepare Before Clean-up and Repair" flyer on mold and asbestos

Please share this information as broadly as possible.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director

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