

Roofing Projects at the Toronto District School Board

Health & Safety

We have given serious consideration to potential health effects to students and other school occupants and we do everything we can to minimize the imposition on school operations. The roofing process can cause unpleasant odours, which, at times, may enter the building. Please be assured that there is no risk to school occupants and we are working with our facilities and health and safety teams to reduce discomfort.

It is noteworthy that the odour threshold of asphalt is very low, which means that it can be smelled at very low concentrations and odour is not necessarily a sign of high concentrations of asphalt. Nevertheless, we recognize that odours and the irritating effects of asphalt are objectionable and we therefore take all possible steps to protect school occupants from asphalt fume and odours. These steps include:

- Turning off air handling systems during roofing, so that fumes are not drawn into the school.
- Sealing all windows and openings.
- Placing the asphalt kettle downwind of the school.
- Flushing the school with clean air through the HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) system at night to dilute any contaminants that entered during the previous day's roofing operations.
- Providing a series of portable air circulation fans and a portable charcoal filter odour removal system.

We know that asphalt concentrations drop significantly at short distances from the asphalt kettle. Our testing shows that particulate levels, which are an indicator of asphalt fume, are about 10 times lower inside the school than near the asphalt kettle.

The TDSB has not had any stop work orders from the Ministry of Labour on roofing work.

The TDSB works closely with Toronto Public Health and the Ministry of Labour on roofing projects. Toronto Public Health has reaffirmed that: **smelling odours as a result of roofing repairs is not indicative of negative health impacts.**

