



# The Risk Management Insider

A health, safety, risk management resource for school officials

## Monitoring the air you breathe

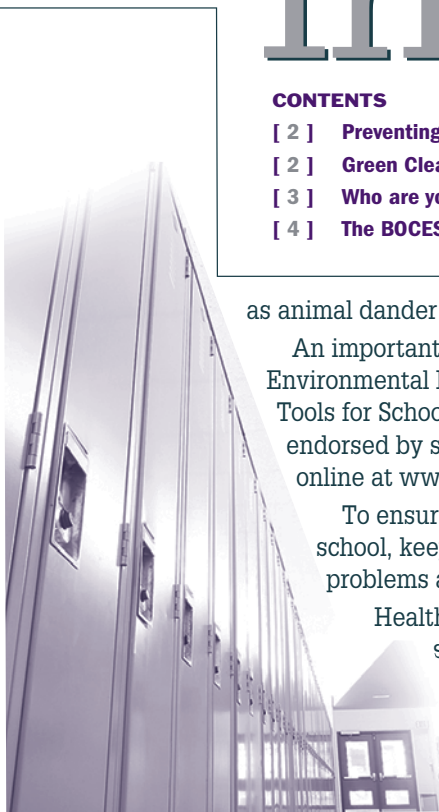
Depending on the season, school facility directors experience different types of indoor air quality complaints.

The Capital Region BOCES Health-Safety-Risk Management team can help schools respond to these complaints and find solutions.

The state standard for ventilation in classrooms is four air exchanges per minute. In other words, every 15 minutes the air must be completely recycled, said Micki Jones, a BOCES safety specialist.

BOCES safety specialists can assess classrooms or areas that are bothering staff by looking for problem signs: water staining, humidity or plants being left on heaters and vents, which could all indicate a possible mold problem.

The specialists will talk to building occupants to understand medical history, symptoms and potential sources of air contaminants, such



as animal dander on workers' clothing, Jones said.

An important resource for schools is the Environmental Protection Agency's Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Action Kit. The kit has been endorsed by several national organizations and is online at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/toolkit.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/toolkit.html).

To ensure air quality is at its best in your school, keep things clean, monitor moisture problems and investigate every complaint.

Health-Safety-Risk Management is sponsoring indoor air quality workshops on July 17, in Saratoga Springs, and on July 19, in Albany. Topics will include: how HVAC systems work, indoor air quality complaint response and remediation. Watch for registration forms in the mail.

### CONTENTS

- [ 2 ] Preventing Lyme Disease
- [ 2 ] Green Cleaning resources
- [ 3 ] Who are your first responders?
- [ 4 ] The BOCES team



## Cleaning Green

To protect the health of school children in New York, a new state regulation is requiring all schools to use "green" cleaning products.

The law, which went into effect on Sept. 1, 2006, requires schools to use environmentally friendly cleaning products. These products minimize the impact to human health and the environment, while still cleaning effectively.

"If we have a choice to use a product that is less harmful to persons and the environment, I believe we should use that product – as it is the right and responsible choice to make," said Carol Bohuslavsky, a safety specialist for Capital Region BOCES Health-Safety-Risk Management department.

**"If we have a choice to use a product that is less harmful... we should..."**

Although the law went into effect at the beginning of the 2006-07 school year, products that were purchased before Sept. 1, 2006, can be used until they are gone. Also, schools are encouraged to test green cleaning products before they purchase large quantities of them.

All public elementary and secondary schools, BOCES facilities, charter schools, private and parochial schools and state-supported schools in New York are required to comply with the legislation. Some school personnel, such as nurses and cafeteria workers, have expressed concern about the new regulation because existing health and sanitation regulations require them to use non-green products to properly  
**-Cleaning...continued on page two**



## Lyme Disease: The facts

As the weather gets warmer and more people go outside, the risk of getting Lyme Disease increases.

In order to ensure safety, it is important to know how to prevent being bitten and to know the signs and symptoms of a bite.

### What is Lyme Disease?

Lyme Disease is an infection that can produce skin, arthritic, cardiac and neurological symptoms.

### What causes Lyme Disease?

Lyme Disease is caused by a bacterium that is spread by deer ticks.

### Where is the tick found?

In New York State, infected ticks have been found throughout Long Island, parts of New York City and along the Hudson Valley as far north as Ulster and Dutchess counties. The tick is expected to spread to other counties. It can be found in almost any outdoor location with vegetation, as well as on animals.



### What does the tick look like?

The tick is no bigger than a sesame seed and therefore difficult to see. It is black and red before feeding. After it has filled with

blood, it is the size of a small pea and is blue/black in color.

### How can I avoid being bitten by a tick?

Stay in the center of trails and paths. Wear long pants, with the bottoms tucked into socks or boots, and wear long-sleeved shirts. Light-colored clothing makes it easier to spot ticks. Use insect and tick repellants containing the chemical DEET. Check yourself, pets and children for ticks frequently while outside. Check again at home.

### When am I most likely to be bitten?

Ticks feed from April through October. June and July are the highest risk months for human exposure.

### What should I do if I am bitten?

A tick must feed for many hours before the disease is transmitted. If you find a tick, use tweezers, or your fingers and a piece of paper or a leaf, to grasp the tick's mouth as close to the skin as possible. Pull steadily and firmly until the tick releases. Apply antiseptic. Save the tick. Your doctor may want to see it.

### What are the symptoms?

Symptoms and severity vary. Early symptoms usually occur within a month of exposure, frequently as a circular rash, with a clear center area. Fever, headache, fatigue, stiff neck and muscle or joint pain are other early warnings. Within weeks to months of the rash, nervous system involvement, including meningitis, encephalitis or facial palsy can occur. Heart abnormalities may also occur within a few weeks of rash onset. Months or years later joint swelling may occur and can become chronic.

### Is there any way to treat the disease?

Symptoms of Lyme Disease are

-Lyme continued on page three

## Green products preserve environment, help health

**-Cleaning...continued from page one** sanitize. The new regulation does not supersede existing health and sanitary regulations. If a certain task, such as sanitizing equipment or utensils in a kitchen, requires a non-green product, the non-green product should be used. If a task can be done with a green product, the district should use that product.

The Capital Region BOCES Health-Safety-Risk Management department is a resource for districts during the transition to green cleaning products. The HSRM department circulated information

from the regulatory agencies to ensure that districts know how to be compliant with the new law.

Health-Safety-Risk Management supplied districts with a Web site that lists the approved green certified products. By cross-referencing lists, districts can be sure that their vendors are offering products that have met the standards and criteria of the regulation. HSRM works with the districts and vendors to develop programs that use green products in the most efficient and economical ways.

## RESOURCES

- **New York State Education Department, Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education Web site - The Web site outlines steps for inventory and purchase of green cleaning products.**  
[www.emsc.nysed.gov/facplan/greenclean.htm](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/facplan/greenclean.htm)
- **Green Seal Inc. - The Green Seal Inc. Web site lists certified green products.**  
[www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)
- **Office of General Services - The Green Cleaning Procurement section of the Office of General Services.**  
<http://www.ogs.state.ny.us/purchase/greenpurchasing.asp>

## Reminder: July is the deadline for asbestos reinspections

- **School district administrators are reminded to begin planning for the triennial asbestos reinspection that must be completed by July 9, 2007.**
- **Asbestos inspection, mandated by the New York State Education Department, began in 1989. This year's inspection revalidates the condition of any asbestos in school buildings. Districts do not need to remove all asbestos, but must ensure it is in good condition.**
- **The Capital Region BOCES Health-Safety-Risk Management can help with this process. Call your BOCES safety specialist or coordinator for information or call 464-5115.**

-Lyme continued from page two treatable with antibiotics. The earlier treatment begins, the easier it is to prevent the disease's long-term effects.

**Source: New York State Department of Health**

## Do you know who your immediate responders would be in a lockdown?

On Jan. 26, Saratoga Springs High School conducted multiple lockdown drills with the Saratoga Springs Police Department. Many outside monitors on the school campus are off-duty police officers who could immediately respond to a situation within the school building.

Call your BOCES specialist or coordinator for more information or call 464-5115.



Pictured, from left to right, row one: Building Principal Frank Crowley, Safety Specialist Micki Jones, School Resource Officer John Kelly. Row two: Grounds Monitor/ Off-duty Police Officer Shawn Brisco, Grounds Monitor/Off-duty Police Officer Charlie Fischer, Head Grounds Monitor/ Retired Police Officer Dan Mullen.

## Asbestos management training for school personnel

School building personnel looking to refresh or enhance their knowledge of working with asbestos should consider taking one of the courses offered by BOCES Health-Safety-Risk Management. The classes are approved by the New York State Department of Health and The United States Environmental Protection Agency, and are typically attended by buildings and grounds supervisors, head custodians, maintenance staff or other administrators.

The Environmental Protection Agency requires public and private schools for students in grades K-12 to inspect for and manage asbestos materials in buildings under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. Next year, 2007, is an AHERA asbestos re-inspection year, and schools will want to be up-to-date with asbestos management trainings.

- **May 16 – Asbestos handler refresher**
- **May 17 – Asbestos supervisor refresher**
- **May 18 – Inspector/management planner refresher**
- **June 7 – Local education agency designee course**

Unless otherwise noted, courses are at 900 Watervliet-Shaker Road, Albany. Registration begins at 7:45 a.m., and courses begin at 8 a.m.

For more information, e-mail Barry Becker, coordinator, at [bbecker@gw.neric.org](mailto:bbecker@gw.neric.org).

## Who's behind the Health-Safety-Risk Management team?



Pictured, from left to right: Barry Becker, Kristin Buccifero, Sally Margison, Mickie Jones, Carol Bohuslavsky, Bruce Bonacquist, Diane Horne-Jones, John Zepko, Cynthia Holmes, Susan Olivia, Mark Sullivan and Jennifer Bennett. Missing: Timothy Murphy.

The Capital Region BOCES Health-Safety-Risk Management team has years of experience in numerous sectors. Although only one employee may be present in your district, the team behind him or her is a well-educated, diverse group of staff members.

Previous work experience among our group includes the private sector and federal, state and local governments.

The 13 HSRM employees have masters or bachelors degrees in: biology, education, environmental

studies, fire & safety engineering technology, health safety, industrial hygiene, occupational safety and public health.

We have expertise in: asbestos management, chemical inventory database management, confined space permits, construction management and safety, critical incident planning and command, EPA & OSHA compliance, EMT experience, fire and building codes, firefighter experience, forklift operations, hazardous communications, indoor air quality,

industrial hygiene and safety, lead-based paint pesticide application, petroleum bulk storage, planning and training, playground safety and work place hazard assessments.

Organizational membership includes: the National Fire Protection Association, the American Industrial Hygienist Association and the Association of Educational Safety & Health Professionals.

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