



# City of Lebanon Fire Department

Headquarters/Station 11  
975 Lasley Drive, Lebanon, IN 46052

*Fire Chief Charles E. Batts*

*The Desire to Serve- The Courage to Act- The Ability to Perform*

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **\*\* Officials Investigate Health Concerns at Perry Worth Elementary School \*\***

Officials from the Indiana Department of Health, Lebanon Community School Corporation, and the City of Lebanon Fire Department worked in cooperation to investigate air quality and public safety concerns at Perry Worth Elementary School. The investigation stems from a series of reports of odors in the school, culminating in a complaint filed with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, who in turn referred the case to IDOH. The nearly 60-year-old building is currently undergoing extensive renovation and construction and has remained open throughout the project.

The Lebanon Fire Department was first made aware of the situation just before noon on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. A neighboring fire department had received a voicemail from a concerned citizen and forwarded the information to Lebanon Fire Chief Chuck Batts. Fire Department Administrative Chiefs immediately met with school staff, and a Lebanon Fire Department crew was dispatched to Perry Worth to investigate. Firefighters inspected all areas of the building using a 4-Gas Meter. The instrument is used extensively by public safety agencies, and simultaneously measures oxygen concentration, carbon monoxide levels, hydrogen sulfide (sewer gas), and combustible gases such as natural gas and propane. The initial investigation produced no remarkable results, and the building was deemed safe by fire department personnel. Oxygen concentrations in all areas of the building were within normal range, and no traces of toxic or combustible gases were located. All LFD units cleared the scene at 3:04 pm Tuesday.

Less than 24 hours later, Boone County Communications Center received a 9-1-1 call from an anonymous caller requesting firefighters investigate an odor of gas at the school. Fire crews responded to the scene and performed a detailed investigation of the building using gas monitoring instruments which produced no abnormal results. At 10:00 am Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, administrators from LCSC and Lebanon Fire Department accompanied an investigator from the Indiana Department of Health to conduct an indoor air quality inspection at the school. The IDOH investigation included testing equipment and methodology similar to those used by the fire department, with additional tests being performed for carbon dioxide and Volatile Organic Compounds. The tests performed on the scene produced no remarkable results and all readings were within normal range.

Based on the results of three separate air quality tests, officials have concluded the school is safe for normal operations. The Indiana Department of Health will release a detailed report to school officials in the coming weeks. School and Fire Department officials will continue to monitor air quality and provide updates to the public when available. We urge anyone who notices gas odors or experiences symptoms such as sudden onset of headache or nausea to contact 9-1-1 immediately.

### **Public Information Officers**

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