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Executive Director

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

MARY FALLIN
Governor

March 3, 2016

Attention Public Elementary, Middle, Vocational, and High Schools in Oklahoma:

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is announcing the launch of the Oklahoma School Chemical Disposal Program. The School Chemical Disposal Program will remove unused, outdated, and potentially dangerous chemicals from school laboratories across the state and provide an opportunity for schools to safely dispose of their unwanted chemical inventory at no cost to the school. The goal of this program is to create a safer laboratory environment for students, teachers, and other staff members and to prevent any laboratory chemical disasters. The program is made possible by the DEQ's Site Cleanup Assistance Program.

Schools in the state of Tennessee experienced explosions during improperly disposal of chemicals on two separate occasions. In one instance, the unwanted chemicals were being transported by pickup truck when some of the bottles began to leak. Exposure to the air caused an explosion. Another explosion occurred when incompatible chemicals were thrown in the regular trash. These two events resulted in approximately \$300,000 in cleanup costs for the schools involved. Fortunately, no one was injured in either event.

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality is taking a proactive approach to prevent these risks by helping schools clean out their chemical inventories and provide schools with resources for safe chemical management. Through the program, schools will be able to dispose of their unwanted chemicals and help reduce the potential for harm to people and the environment.

DEQ's Pollution Prevention Program will work with you to help promote smart chemical management after your school receives cleanup at no cost to the school. The Pollution Prevention Program will assist the school in creating a chemical hygiene plan, a chemical inventory, and assist the school with any questions regarding the appointment of a chemical hygiene officer, if your school does not already have these items in place.



To apply for the School Chemical Disposal Program, please visit the website below to download and submit the application. The application along with resources for school laboratories can be found at:

<http://www.deq.state.ok.us/lpdnew/scap/SCAP%20Webpage/SchoolChems.html>

Schools will receive assistance through the program on a first-come, first-served and high priority basis. Please provide only one application per school facility.

If your school has a chemical inventory in place, please convert it to our format and attach it to the application before submitting. Please only include chemicals that are to be disposed of. Be advised that performing a chemical inventory without proper knowledge of chemistry can be dangerous. If your school does not have a chemical inventory in place, DEQ contractors will inventory chemicals prior to removal.

Questions about the program may be directed to:

Trenton Wilhelm

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or

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We hope you take this opportunity to participate in the Oklahoma School Chemical Disposal Program. We look forward to helping you make Oklahoma schools a safer place to learn.

Sincerely,



Kelly Dixon

Land Protection Division Director

Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality