

Acton school's portables free of mould so far

Toxic mould has been found in the portables at seven Halton Catholic schools but portables at St. Joseph's in Acton have passed a preliminary inspection.

The Halton Catholic District School Board is in the process of checking its 88 portables for the strachybotrys mould which is toxic to some children and can cause allergic or asthmatic reactions or flu-like symptoms.

Chris Jewell, the board's communications officer, said all four of St. Joseph's portables passed visual inspections by board staff. One portable has had a further inspection

by Decommissioning Consulting Services, the firm being used to check for and remove any mould found. St. Joseph's principal Robert Maggio said some water stains were found in that portable. That portable had remedial work done over the March Break.

Remedial work includes disinfecting areas and adjoining surfaces where mould was found and replacing affected materials such as wood and wall-board.

"What they're looking for is any evidence of water leakage or mould growth or evidence of mould growth," Jewell said.

The other three portables must still undergo an intrusive inspection where the ceiling, wall and floor cavities are checked.

Other schools that have had portables requiring cleansing are Ascension and Holy Rosary in Burlington, St. Vincent, St. Joseph, Loyola Secondary School and the Adult Learning Centre in Oakville and Holy Rosary in Milton. Students at those schools were transferred to temporary classes in libraries, gyms and computer labs while the cleansing was completed but have since moved back into the portables.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer

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