

East Palestine High School
Superintendent Chris Neifer
East Palestine Elementary School
Superintendent Robert Clunen
East Palestine, Ohio

March 27, 2023

Dear Superintendents Cluen and Niefer:

I am contacting you because of concerns expressed to me by your faculty and parents about the safety of your school buildings. I have visited East Palestine four times since mid-February 2023 to help residents and businesses understand the safety of their water, air, soils, and homes. My volunteer Purdue University team has been conducting free chemical testing for residents and businesses. I am encouraged by the actions taken by residents to obtain answers to their questions and compassion about making East Palestine safe. On March 24, I had the pleasure of meeting with U.S. EPA Region 5 officials when I was visiting the area.

I have become concerned that your schools have not yet been professionally cleaned by U.S. EPA designated building cleaning contractors, and have not seen evidence that they have been. My understanding is that, after the Norfolk Southern chemical spill and chemical fires, some faculty experienced health impacts at both the elementary school and high school. It is also my understanding that duct cleaning was not conducted and particulate matter was observed inside the school buildings after the incident.

I sincerely encourage you to accept U.S. EPA's offer to clean the schools for sake of thoroughness in supporting a safe working and learning environment. This cleaning service could be a once in a lifetime opportunity for these schools. It may also provide faculty, staff, and parents peace of mind. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. You, your faculty, and staff are doing a great service educating the next generation of leaders. If you have questions, I can be reached at awhelton@purdue.edu. Information contained here is based on my opinions and experiences.

Sincerely,



Andrew Whelton, Ph.D.