

Fax

To: Dale Shippley/Renee Young **From:** Scott E Baker Haz Mat Coordinator
Fax: 614/799-3831 **Pages:** Two including cover
Phone: **Date:** 3/7/01
Re: Mercury spill on March 6, 2001 **CC:** Dan Bolger Director

Urgent **For Review** **Please Comment** **Please Reply** **Please Recycle**

Dale and Renee, just a bit of information for you on an incident that occurred in Lancaster yesterday. Lancaster Fire Department notified our office but were unsuccessful in reaching one of us. They didn't however try to page us. Dan received a call from the media and responded accordingly even though he was in Columbus at the time. He also received a call from one of our LEPC members that heard it on the scanner. Renee I told you we have ears to the ground in Fairfield County. Just today I spoke with a representative of LFD and was told it in fact was mercury. Approximately 1 gram was spilled and the school called a clean up contractor. The spill was contained to the boiling pot of oil used to fry the donuts. Any questions, don't hesitate to call us. We are always here.

Scott

Local high school evacuated



FISHER CATHOLIC High School students board an ambulance headed for Fairfield Medical Center on Tuesday. Three students were taken to the hospital and released for possible mercury contact. (E-G photo by Rose Shriver)

Mercury spill closes Fisher Catholic High

By WALT WILLIAMS
The Eagle-Gazette Staff

Fisher Catholic High School was evacuated Tuesday after a mercury thermometer broke open in a home economics class.

Three students in the class were taken by ambulance to Fairfield Medical Center after eating doughnuts that may have contained small amounts of mercury, said Lt. Ed Breining of the Lancaster Fire Department.

The students were taken to the hospital only as a precaution, he said.

A hospital spokesman said the students' mercury exposure was very low. They were treated and released, but doctors want the students to submit urine samples at a later date so they can check mercury levels.

The hospital also wants the 17 other students in the class to submit urine samples as a precaution.

Todd Spencer, a chemistry teacher at Fisher Catholic, said students in the home economics class were making doughnuts.

He said "about a gram" of mercury spilled from the thermometer.

Spencer said mercury could be dangerous if exposed to skin or breathed in over prolonged periods of time.

"But in your average exposure you probably get more from eating fish," he

said.

The incident happened around 1:30 p.m. Tuesday. The Lancaster Fire Department responded to the call. The entire school was evacuated and students were dismissed early.

"It's just like a fire," Spencer said. "With a small fire, you evacuate the whole school."

Breining said the students were using the thermometer to measure the temperature of oil used to fry doughnut batter.

The students ate the doughnuts and only later discovered the thermometer was broken.

Breining said firefighters put the pan with the oil in a snowdrift to cool the oil. A cleanup contractor would stop by later in the day to clean the pan.

He said the amount of mercury spilled was "very small."

Students who had cars left for home while the rest waited outside the main doors for buses or someone to pick them up. They were let back in the school for a short time to gather their belongings.

(Eagle-Gazette staff writer Carl Burnett Jr. contributed to this report.)



FISHER CATHOLIC High School home economics teacher Patty DeBruin (second from right in glasses) tells students they must remain outside the school building while fire department personnel clean up the mercury spill Tuesday. (E-G photo by Rose Shriver)

By J
The

Al
ing
atte
of a
star
"I
of J
Jose
som
rug
W
Sue
Mur
not
mal
If
mur
the
the

M
raig
Th
cem
a t
Tho
stall
In
nari
stab
the
port
with
H
and
after

C
to

By C
The

Th
miss
ques
fore
wate
for
tal
Al
Judy
Jon
had
proj
the
lawy

R

By W
The

For
ers
al
o
about
Thor
Scho
An
arat
or A
scho
juni
pray
the