

Environmental Update



Galena Public School System Aviation Vocational Training Center



Future studies, remedies will address indoor air contamination problem

Indoor air quality in the Galena Aviation Vocational Technical Center (GAVTC) has been affected by past industrial activities in and around the building, and migration of petroleum contamination from the former Saddle Tank Area at Galena Airport. Fuel-related contaminants (benzene) have been detected in indoor air samples.

The results of air samples collected in the GAVTC indicate no immediate risk to students and teachers, according to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). The sampling was conducted by the Air Force in August and September 2002.

These air sampling results were evaluated by health professionals and representatives of federal and state agencies: Air Force's health professionals (the Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis, its consultants, and 611th Air Support Group experts), the Alaska Department of Environmental



Galena Aviation Vocational Technical Center.

Conservation (ADEC), and DHSS. In addition, the Louden Tribal Council (LTC), Galena City School, and the City of Galena have been informed of the sampling results.

However, the air quality of the building is still a concern for people who will be in the building over multiple years. Additional air sampling studies are being implemented to get a clearer picture of what exposure is likely in the long term. For example, more study can help determine if contaminant concentrations will decrease over the years, and specific sampling will be done in the places where teachers and students spend their time. Future engineering remedies are also being evaluated for the GAVTC to help decrease the contaminant concentrations.

BACKGROUND:

During the period of 1970-1997, the GAVTC facility was used as a hangar by a local flying service. In the mid-1990s, indoor air quality concerns were identified. The Air Force constructed and used a fuel vapor vacuum system to minimize the potential for indoor air hazards. A disagreement over rental terms caused the flying service to vacate the building in 1997. Since the building



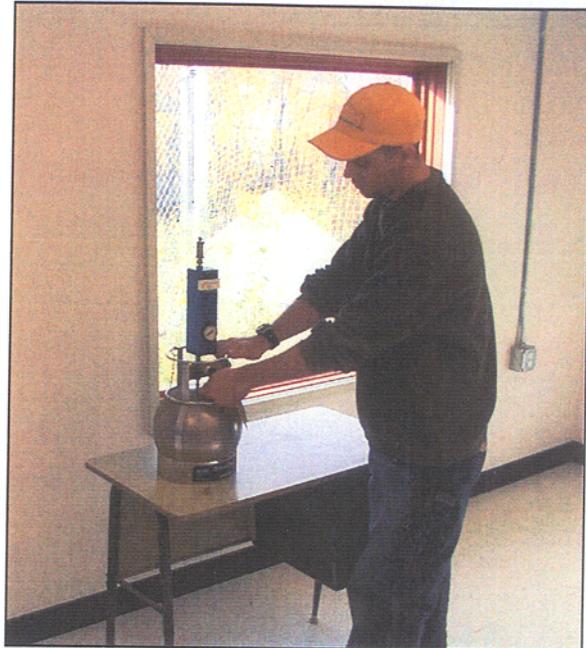
Summa Canister and 12-hour regulators that were used to measure air quality in the GAVTC.

was unoccupied the Air Force stopped the ventilation measures. The building was purchased by the City of Galena in 2000. The Galena School District obtained funding to convert the building into a vocational school. These renovation activities were implemented in 2001-2002. The GAVTC opened in September 2002.

A Remedial Process Optimization (RPO) study was conducted by the Air Force in June 2002. This study included experts in remediation at contaminated sites and certified occupational health professionals. Participants included ADEC, LTC, and the Air Force. During the study the Tribal Council indicated that students would soon occupy the building. The RPO team recommended that the Galena City School be notified of past indoor air concerns. The team also recommended that additional indoor air sampling be conducted, and appropriate follow-on actions be taken.

In August 2002, a system was installed beneath the GAVTC to minimize vapors from the underlying fuel plume moving into the building. Yukanna Development Corporation personnel were trained to operate, maintain, and monitor the system. The system is currently operational.

Indoor air quality samples were collected in August and September 2002 at multiple locations in the building. The samples indicated presence of fuel-related contamination. These results were submitted to



A Summa Canister is placed in the GAVTC lower classroom to collect air quality samples.

all agencies for their evaluation.

CONTINUING ACTIONS:

Specific focus continues to be placed on protection of the students and teachers at the GAVTC.

The Air Force and all agencies involved will continue to identify and implement protective measures at the GAVTC including:

- Collection of additional air sampling data;
- Continued operation of system to minimize vapors entering the building;
- Evaluation of modifications to the building include sealing the floors and walls, and installation of a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system; and
- Long-term remediation plans for the Saddle Tank area.

As additional air sampling data and building modifications are evaluated, the Air Force will work in close coordination with all agencies involved and the citizens of Galena.

**For additional information on the Air Force environmental cleanup of Galena contact:
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