

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE AUGUST 1, 2006

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT MARK MAZZAFERRO (707) 649-5462 WILLIAM TWEEDY (707) 333-8433

FIRE STATION 24 ON OAKWOOD STREET TEMPORARILY CLOSED Testing reveals unknown levels of mold contamination and other pollutants

VALLEJO - A study by an environmental testing firm of a fire station on Oakwood Street has revealed the presence of mold and other pollutants, resulting in the closure of the station and the relocation of the firefighters to another station.

Vallejo Fire Chief Don Parker ordered the relocation of nine firefighters, an engine and all related apparatus and equipment to Station 27 on Columbus Parkway on Tuesday afternoon following release of the results of the testing.

"Our two main concerns are the protection of the community and the health of our firefighters," Parker said of the move. "We believe this temporary solution will address both of those concerns."

While the study revealed the presence of mold and other pollutants, the level of contamination has yet to be determined. An environmental toxicologist has been hired to evaluate the samples that have been removed from the building and determine what, if anything, the city will need to do.

Molds (sometimes referred to as black molds, even though mold can come in a variety of colors) can cause a wide array of adverse responses in humans depending on the type and quantity that is present. However, these are not the lone factors when considering the health affects to mold exposure. Since dose and human response can be highly individualistic, the sensitivity of the person exposed is also an important consideration.

(More)

Some firefighters have reported illnesses following shifts in the building, which prompted the study and subsequent move. However, no determination has been made as to the reason for the illnesses or if the building or its contents are the cause. Parker has directed each firefighter working in the station to have a medical examination at Kaiser Occupational Health, the city's medical provider for such services.

"We want to err on the side of caution," Parker said. "If the building is deemed to be OK, we'll know about it by the end of the week and re-occupy the station."

If the situation is a long-term problem, work will begin on finding a location close to the Oakwood station – Station 24 - to provide service to that area while a solution is considered.

"This is a precautionary move, and we hope it is temporary," Parker said.