

**Mayfield City School District  
Success Story  
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In 2006, an environmental health effort that began as an examination of indoor air quality quickly evolved into a comprehensive school chemical management program for Ohio's Mayfield City School District (CSD). In the two years since, Mayfield CSD has sustained a responsible chemical management program that extends from the classroom to school facilities and the teaching curriculum. By taking a good idea and expanding it into a great one, Mayfield CSD has made the school environment a safer place where students and staff can learn and work.



Unused, outdated chemicals identified for safe removal from Mayfield High School.

Mayfield City School District (CSD) is located in Cuyahoga County, Ohio outside of the city of Cleveland. The district enrolls over 4100 students and employees 650 staff members.

**Getting Started**

When Frank Sever, Mayfield City School District's Supervisor of Buildings, Grounds and Equipment, decided to examine chemical usage on facility grounds, he turned to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Tools for Schools (TfS) which was being used by the school district as part of their indoor air quality program. As a result of completing the TfS assessment, including walkthroughs of classrooms and custodial areas, Mr. Sever decided that removing outdated

and unneeded chemicals from school facilities would be a critical first step towards creating a healthier environment for students and staff.

A team of district staff led by Sever, Science Department Chair Jeff Moegling, and Assistant Superintendent of Buildings, Grounds and Equipment, Steve Evans quickly established several immediate goals for

Mayfield CSD's newly minted school chemical management program. In addition to removing outdated chemicals, the Mayfield CSD team also aimed to remove all pesticides, out-dated maintenance supplies such as paint and cleaning products, and unneeded cleaning supplies such as many of the aerosol products found throughout the school district. Finally, Mayfield CSD sought to remove and replace all mercury containing devices like old wall thermostats and boiler control devices.



Outdated container of Ammonium Hydroxide identified for safe removal from Mayfield High School.

## Making Progress

Thanks to support from district staff and management, Mayfield CSD was able to achieve its chemical management goals. In addition to staff time, the district contributed monetary resources to establish the chemical management program and ensure its long-term success. For \$17,000, Mayfield CSD was able to hire hazardous waste professionals to inventory and safely dispose of approximately 2,000 pounds of chemicals, some of which were at least four decades old, from district schools.

Mayfield CSD also created a mercury-free environment for students and staff by removing over 160 mercury-containing devices from its schools. The school district collaborated with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) to pack and remove mercury-containing devices and turn them over to Bowling Green State University for proper disposal. OEPA provided this service to Mayfield CSD free of charge. Some of the devices removed from Mayfield CSD schools included thermostats, water controls, and air conditioning (HVAC) thermostat controls.

“You need to look at school buildings with another set of eyes...only then you begin to see what may be hazardous to the students.”

-Frank Sever, Supervisor of Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment for Mayfield CSD

## Looking Ahead

Now that Mayfield CSD has removed potential chemical hazards – from outdated laboratory chemicals to pesticides and aerosol cans— from its schools, district staff have implemented a second phase in which the district:

- Identifies and removes any chemicals that it may have overlooked during the first cleanout;
- Adopts green cleaning and maintenance practices including purchasing [Green Seal](#) products, eliminating the use of aerosol products in district schools, and practicing [Integrated Pest Management](#) (IPM) rather than using potentially harmful pesticides; and
- Provides ongoing training to teachers, staff, and custodians on the importance of responsible chemical management.

The district has undertaken these actions with the ultimate goal of instituting long-term chemical management solutions. On average, Mayfield CSD has spent approximately \$1500 a year to sustain their chemical management efforts.



Chemical storage in a science classroom at Mayfield High School.

## Critical Success Factors

Frank Sever does not hesitate to point to the dedicated Mayfield CSD staff as the single most important factor contributing to the district’s ongoing efforts. With a team consisting of representatives from the science department, employees in the building, grounds and equipment department, custodial staff, and teachers, the district has successfully leveraged the wide range of staff

expertise needed to maintain a responsible chemical management program.

Recognizing both the success of the initial effort to remove potential chemical hazards and the need to implement long-term safety measures, Mayfield CSD's administration is also extremely supportive of the chemical management team's efforts. As a result of this upper-level support and staff determination, Mayfield CSD's operating budget now includes funding for responsible chemical management.

#### **What Can I Do: Lessons Learned from Mayfield City School District**

- Assemble a team that has expertise in different areas of chemical knowledge and management;
- Seek support from upper-level management and decision makers who have an influence on a school and/or district's budget;
- Conduct a walkthrough of your school to assess current and potential chemical management concerns;
- Establish achievable short term goals to help build momentum; and
- Develop a long-term plan for responsible chemical management that sustains the successes achieved in your initial efforts to address chemicals in your school.

For more information on Mayfield City Schools and EPA's efforts to promote responsible chemical management, visit the following Web sites:

[Mayfield City School District](#)

[EPA Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign \(SC3\)](#)