

#1275185

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EBB-E-1 to E-4

## **Scent Awareness**

### **General**

The St. James-Assiniboia School Division affirms its commitment to providing all staff, students, contractors, volunteers, summer students, and visitors to its facilities, a safe and healthy environment in which to work and learn. Clean air is necessary to ensure an optimal learning and working environment in Division schools and buildings.

Recognizing that medical evidence clearly shows that exposure to certain scented chemicals, even in small amounts, can cause adverse health reactions for some people, the St. James-Assiniboia School Division is committed to promoting best practices to ensure a clean air environment for both sensitive and non-sensitive individuals.

The Division, through increasing awareness of the hazards of chemicals in scented products, is requiring all stakeholders to participate in promoting a scent-free environment.

### **Use of Scented Products**

Scented products that may affect indoor air quality come in many forms including but not limited to personal products such as shampoos, fragrances, colognes, hairsprays, deodorants, and scented hand creams. Other irritants may be found in cleaning products, classroom deodorizers, diffusers, oils, laundry detergents, air fresheners, dust, construction materials, paints, etc.

Allergic and asthmatic patients, as well as those with other conditions, report that certain odours, even in the smallest amounts, can trigger an attack. Note: It is a reaction to a chemical exposure, not to an unpleasant smell.

Susceptible individuals may experience symptoms that may include but are not limited to headaches, dizziness, lightheadedness, nausea, fatigue, weakness, insomnia, numbness, upper respiratory symptoms, shortness of breath, skin irritation, malaise, watery eyes, runny nose, etc.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

All stakeholders are required to be scent aware and reduce or avoid the use of scented products. Note: It is important to remember some products, which claim to be 'scent

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free,' may have only masked the scent by use of an additional chemical. Be sure to research the product carefully if using scented products around those who are sensitive.

If an employee, student, visitor or other stakeholder experiences adverse symptoms that they suspect may be caused by their school or work environment, this should be reported to the building administrator or if the person feels comfortable politely approach the individual.

In the spirit of an inclusive environment for all, stakeholders must be considerate and empathetic toward others that may have sensitivities and if approached by someone regarding a scent, be open to feedback and recognize it is not personal or even the scent itself, but the chemical in the scent that may be affecting the individual.

The administrator will take reasonable steps in consultation with the appropriate Human Resources Manager and Safety Officer to investigate the situation and seek solutions and accommodations where practically possible. Should a medical condition be present, the employer may request medical information to support the accommodation process.

To reduce the impact chemicals may have on the indoor environment, and/or to provide accommodation, building administrators may designate scent-free zones. These common areas may include classrooms, hallways, stairwells, lobbies or waiting areas, copier rooms, gymnasiums, reception areas, staff rooms, restrooms, classrooms, conference rooms etc.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

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