

***The following support information was sent from DOE Chief Executive Officer John Shea on Nov. 5 to the DOE Director of Facilities with the request to share it with school custodians.***

### **Winter Ventilation Plan**

In accordance with the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the NYCDOE is taking several steps to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission within school buildings and classrooms. In anticipation of lower outdoor temperatures this winter, the following strategies will be implemented to ensure classroom temperatures remain appropriate while ensuring proper ventilation.

- **MERV-13 Filters:**
  - DOE has purchased MERV-13 filter elements for central HVAC systems that utilize return air.
  - The order is scheduled to arrive starting on November 15<sup>th</sup>, with the final delivery by January 15, 2021. This will allow all buildings to have at least one complete filter set installed.
  - The filters will be delivered in batches:
    - Approximately 13,700 units will be delivered by November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
    - Filters are sized specifically for select systems and will be placed upon delivery.
    - Each week an additional 10-15 percent is expected until order is filled.
  - While awaiting filters these systems should be operated at 100% Outside Air (OA) where possible, and other mitigating measures (e.g. – air purifiers) should be provided if necessary.
  - DSF is prioritizing filter distribution based on the following (and other) criteria, as follows:
    - Buildings where the majority of the instructional spaces are served by a central HVAC system.
    - HVAC systems serving inner core rooms.
    - Buildings with no windows or fixed glazing.
    - HVAC systems where air is recirculated.

- **HEPA Rated Air Purifier Units:**

- DOE initially ordered 10,000 air purifier units – a minimum of 2 filters per building (one for each Nurse’s Office and Isolation Room) were delivered.
- The balance of this initial order is being used to support additional spaces with ventilation concerns, including:
  - Bathrooms with non-working exhaust.
  - Classrooms requiring mitigating measures (interior spaces without windows, rooms awaiting repairs, etc.).
- DOE has ordered an additional 20,000 air purifier units to be provided on the following priority basis:
  - Rooms with limited windows and no mechanical ventilation.
  - Rooms with operable windows and mechanical ventilation awaiting repairs.
  - Inner core rooms (no windows) with HVAC systems and reduced OA supply (to maintain building temperatures in cold weather).
  - Building pending MERV-13 filters and have reduced OA supply (to maintain building temperatures in cold weather).
- Purifiers should be removed and relocated as necessary, should repairs be completed and priorities changed.

- **Other Methods of Managing Colder Temperatures:**

- Post-occupancy ventilation flushing on a daily basis. Note – pre-occupancy flushing can be done if the outside air temperature is above 70° F, but is not necessary in cooler temperatures.
- Adjusting heating operations to maintain space temperatures. This may include:
  - Early start time for pre-heating of occupied areas. Custodian Engineers should request additional 202S reimbursement through their DDF if absolutely necessary based on their building’s profile.
  - Staging boilers to manage load, including keeping multiple boilers on line during the day.
  - Adjusting temperature controls to ensure space heat is maintained.

- o Open windows to increase airflow in and out of the spaces (preferably upper sashes if possible). Note - open window area should be moderated based on outdoor air temperature – not all windows need to be open, nor do those windows need to be fully open, to provide adequate ventilation, especially with reduced occupancy in classrooms. Custodian Engineers should use IAQ monitors to check CO2 levels if requested.
- o Providing space heaters if necessary.
- o Continue to monitor, maintain, and repair existing ventilation systems.