



Thompsonville Fire Department

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Chief of Department

(December 7, 2022)

Good morning,

Mr. DiMauro, I have received your email in concerns to the issues with the makeup air units above the welding shop at the Asnuntuck Community college. When the Thompsonville Fire department responded to the College on Monday our crews were met by the HVAC technician who was working on the system that day and he had advised our crews that while he completed a startup of the system there was a small release of natural gas fumes into the air which spread around the vents. Staff on scene did a great job by activating the fire alarm pull station to evacuate the building because of the smell. While this may have seemed to many as an immediate danger this process in the repair is sometimes normal if the HVAC unit is not calibrated properly. Nevertheless, it is always a good to air on the side of caution with these matters and request the fire department to come check out the problem. Fire crews on scene of the area of concern metered the area with four gas meters which senses any dangerous atmospheres which includes oxygen deficiencies, Carbon Monoxide, Hydrogen Sulfide, and combustibile levels (LEL-UEL) which none were found.

Natural gas is odorless and mercaptan a chemical added to natural gas applications is what was sensed that day, however not at a level which was flammable at the time of the fire departments arrival. There were normal readings on the fire department meters and the fire department also ventilated the area with fans to ensure if there were no more smell from the release. The HVAC company remained on scene after the fire departments departure to continue to work on the HVAC system. While Asnuntuck Community College is in the Thompsonville fire departments authority and we provide EMS and Fire Protection duties, the building is not our jurisdiction because it is a state-owned building. All state buildings fall under the state fire marshal jurisdiction and are inspected and maintained regarding fire systems and fire prevention duties. My fire marshal has made a phone call to that office to ensure this situation at Asnuntuck is resolved to provide the students and staff reassurance that they are safe while attending school or work at that location. If there continues to be any issues or concerns, please reach out to me for assistance.

Warm Regards,

Chief David Deskis