



Jeb Bush  
Governor

# Department of Environmental Protection

Twin Towers Office Building  
2600 Blair Stone Road  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400

Colleen M. Castille  
Secretary

September 14, 2005

Subject: School Science Laboratory Cleanout & Mercury Phase-out Program

Dear Superintendent:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, in partnership with the Florida Department of Education, is coordinating a school science laboratory cleanout endeavor as part of the federal Environmental Protection Agency's School Chemical Cleanout Campaign, or SC3 Program. In order to avoid dangerous chemical spills, explosions, fires and chemical releases to the environment, the SC3 partnership is being designed to assist school districts in compliance assistance, safety training and waste disposal. Chemicals can pose safety and health risks to students and staff, and a number of widely reported incidents involving certain chemicals have resulted in school closures and costly clean-ups.

The overall mission of the SC3 Program is to create a chemically safe school environment in which chemicals are purchased wisely, stored safely, handled appropriately and disposed of properly. SC3 Program goals include: removal of excess, unused, deteriorated or outdated chemicals; identification of dangerous chemicals that should not be present or used; best management practices for chemical handling and storage; and removal of all mercury and mercury-containing devices.

To define the scope of the SC3 Program, the DEP Hazardous Waste Program staff is conducting 20 hazardous waste compliance assistance inspections at public schools throughout the state. A follow-up inspection will be conducted within four (4) months of the initial inspection to determine if violations and unsafe practices have been corrected. Moreover, the following four (4) counties have been selected for a SC3 pilot project: Alachua, Lake, Leon and Broward.

*"More Protection, Less Process"*

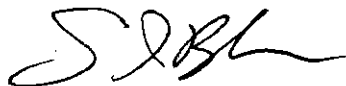
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Preliminary training for the SC3 Program will be conducted on Wednesday, September 28, 2005, at the Florida School Plant Manager Association Conference in Daytona Beach. Additionally, a leading expert from Seattle, Washington, Mr. Dave Waddell has been invited to speak at the Florida Association of Science Teachers Workshop being held November 2-5, 2005, in Orlando.

The main objective of the SC3 Program is to generate participation from school staff on all levels to assure that all laboratory chemicals and maintenance areas are managed effectively, properly and safely. In particular, School Administrators are required to commit to good stewardship in laboratory chemical management in their school district. Administrative support to allocate sufficient time to conduct inventories, clean out storage areas and dispose of unwanted and dangerous chemicals is a priority of this program.

Commitment from each school district's Superintendent and administrative decision-makers is an essential component in the success of the SC3 Program. We would appreciate your support in the SC3 initiatives in order to maintain a safe learning environment in our schools. If you have any questions or comments, please contact John Erickson at 850-245-8767, or by e-mail at [John.Erickson@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:John.Erickson@dep.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,



Tim J. Bahr, Administrator  
Hazardous Waste Regulation