

Fumes Cause Evacuation at National Jewish Health

MARCH 11, 2009

DENVER — *Fire Department Declares All Buildings Safe and Habitable at 11:30 a.m.*

This morning at about 8 a.m. an inadvertent mixing of two common swimming-pool chemicals released toxic fumes that caused the evacuation of several buildings on the National Jewish Health campus. About 500 staff and students were evacuated. Forty-four people were sent to local hospitals for observation and treatment. We are aware of no serious injuries resulting from the fumes.

At approximately 11:30 a.m. the Denver Fire Department declared all buildings safe and available for occupancy. Fire officials did note that people may still smell some chemicals, but that tests showed concentrations throughout the campus were low and the air safe. The Fire Department continues to monitor the buildings Monday afternoon.

National Jewish Health has resumed full operations as of Monday afternoon, except for Kunsberg School, which will remain closed for the remainder of the day. Kunsberg will reopen Tuesday morning.

Kunsberg School, on the campus of National Jewish Health, is an elementary school for children with chronic diseases, such as asthma, whose disease has caused them to miss school and fall behind in their studies. It is free and certified by the Colorado Department of Education. More information about Kunsberg School is available [here](#).

The two chemicals that mixed were hydrochloric acid and sodium hypochlorite. Both are used to condition the water and keep it clean.

Any patients who may have missed their appointments due to the event can call 303-398-1355 to reschedule.

National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 120 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the [media resources page](#).

Media Contacts

Our team is available to arrange interviews, discuss events and story ideas.

William Allstetter
303.398.1002
allstetterw@njhealth.org

Adam Dormuth
303.398.1082
dormutha@njhealth.org