



**CITY OF PEABODY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
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**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
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## **Air Quality Monitoring Completed Following Lifoam Fire**

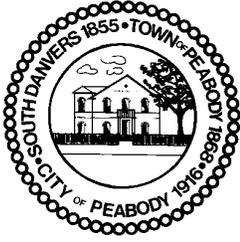
On July 12, 2016, the Peabody Fire Department responded to a fire at Lifoam Industries located at 2 Fifth Street, Peabody MA. Lifoam is a facility that manufactures foam-based products such as coolers, gel packs, and pool toys.

Peabody Fire Chief Steven Pasdon requested the assistance of the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services Hazardous Materials Emergency Response unit to monitor air quality at the fire scene and in the adjacent neighborhood. The HazMat unit responded on-site with its mobile air-testing unit and a team of trained technicians. In addition, Environmental Analysts from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's Emergency Response unit were on-site conducting independent air quality analysis, as well as analysis of run-off water from the firefighting operation.

The response team set up 5 monitoring stations around the incident, including one adjacent to the residences on Jubilee Drive. In addition, technicians with hand-held monitoring equipment were deployed both on-site and in the residential neighborhood on an hourly basis beginning the evening of July 12 from 5:00 pm – 2:30 am and again on the morning of July 13 from 7:30 am – 11 am. DEP sampling was conducted on the evening of July 12 and repeated on the morning of July 13.

Based upon a review of materials known to be used in the manufacturing process, the HazMat team tested for 33 potential compounds. To represent the worst case scenario, air was sampled right in the plume of smoke as it exited the Lifoam building. At this location, 8 compounds were identified as being present. All 8 of these compounds were present in concentrations significantly below the EPA's "Acute Exposure Level Guidelines." Some of the compounds were present in levels that would cause an odor, but not at levels that would pose health effects. This sampling was then repeated on Jubilee Drive, and levels at that location were even lower than the levels taken on the Lifoam grounds. These results have been reviewed by staff of Mass DEP, Peabody Fire Department, and Peabody Board of Health, and all agencies agree that results show no significant threat to people's health and no need for evacuation of the area.

EPA developed its Acute Exposure Level Guidelines to provide guidance to emergency planners and first responders worldwide to deal with rare, usually accidental, releases of chemicals into the air. AEGLs are designed to protect the elderly and children, and other individuals who may be susceptible. The AEGLs used as reference at this site are the conservative "Level 1" values, which are defined as levels that can cause "Notable discomfort, irritation, or certain asymptomatic non-sensory effects. However, the effects are not disabling and are transient and reversible upon cessation of exposure."



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A review of the Material Safety Data Sheets for foam products indicates that there is a risk of respiratory, skin, or eye irritation for individuals exposed to smoke. The foam product is not reported to pose a risk of causing cancer or reproductive toxicity.

Sampling of the run-off water from the firefighting operation also showed no presence of compounds at levels of concern due to this event.

A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet for this product, as well as a copy of the air sampling test results, can be found on the City of Peabody website at [www.peabody-ma.gov](http://www.peabody-ma.gov). Please contact the Peabody Health Department at 978-538-5920 if you have additional questions or concerns.