



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT:
Katie Keach at 619-847-8274 or KKeach@sandiego.gov

City of San Diego to Relocate Employees from Leased Building Due to Asbestos

SOME CITY OPERATIONS MOVING FOLLOWING POSITIVE TEST AT PRIVATELY OWNED EXECUTIVE COMPLEX

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego announced today that it is moving all of its employees from a building it leases from a private property owner due to concerns about the presence of asbestos-containing construction debris. Following a positive test for asbestos that led to the immediate removal of City employees last Friday, remedial actions have been taken by the landlord. However, due to these ongoing construction-related concerns, the City has decided to relocate its affected employees. City operations are not anticipated to be impacted.

Approximately 550 City employees occupied leased space in the Executive Complex building, located at 1010 Second Ave., which is privately owned by Tower 180 Owner, LLC. While the City arranges for alternate work sites, some employees will work from the adjacent City Administration Building located at 202 C St. and some are telecommuting.

The County periodically inspects the construction site to ensure that asbestos containment remains intact. Throughout the renovations, which began several months ago, the landlord of Executive Complex also regularly tested the air and construction debris for the presence of asbestos because of the age of the building.

All previous tests demonstrated the conditions were safe for employees to be present. On Friday, Jan. 26, 2018, a single location of construction debris tested positive for asbestos. Upon learning the results that afternoon, the City immediately released all employees from the building. They were directed not to return until further notice. The entire building, including vacant areas, was retested over the weekend, and remediation was performed by contractors for the building. Because this is not a City project, no taxpayer funds are being used on the construction activity.

Because construction is anticipated to continue for several more months, the City chose to move out all employees in an abundance of caution. The City is pursuing options to safely remove documents and other necessary materials from Executive Complex. A call-in number has been established for employees to ask any questions regarding this event.

“The City is working with the building owner to protect the interests of our employees and taxpayers as we shift operations elsewhere,” said Ron Villa, Deputy Chief Operating Officer for the City. “We are working to ensure this does not affect our service to residents and other customers. We appreciate the flexibility of our employees and expect full continuity of our operations without impact to our core services.”

“Mayor Faulconer has set a great example of putting employees first and it’s obvious by how this is being handled that he and his management team hold our employees in the highest regard,” said Cathleen Higgins, Government Relations Director for the Municipal Employees Association. “City leaders have been extraordinary in dealing with this situation. They acted immediately and it’s obvious, from the highest levels at City Hall all the way down, that management cares about its employees.”

Some of the City operations housed in Executive Complex included Fire-Rescue management, Office of Homeland Security, transportation engineering operations, debt collection, Planning Department, Corporate Partnerships and Development, Information Technology Department, Auditor, and Ethics Commission, among others.

The City’s lease of Executive Complex was slated to terminate on June 30, 2019. However, the City has an option to terminate sooner and planned to shift all operations currently located at Executive Complex to 101 Ash St., which the City leased-to-own and is starting renovations in the next few months. The current timeline for the renovations at 101 Ash St. to be complete is Fall/Winter 2018.

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