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# Strange Odor Sends Nearly Dozen Elmwood Park Students To Hospital

by Jerry DeMarco & Cecilia Levine



At the Gantner School. Photo Credit: *Cecilia Levine*



ELMWOOD PARK, N.J. – Nearly a dozen Elmwood Park elementary school students and a local firefighter were taken to area hospitals as a precaution Wednesday afternoon after at least two youngsters fainted and another reported stomach pains and nausea from what authorities deemed an "unidentified odor."

The incident triggered the evacuation of the Gantner Avenue Elementary School on Roosevelt Avenue and a massive emergency response just after 1:30 p.m.

A triage unit was set up and several ambulances were requested following reactions to the odor, Police Chief Michael Foligno said.

Three students were transported to the hospital straight from the school and eight others from a local firehouse, where the triage unit was set up. A firefighter also went to the hospital, responders said.

A Bergen County Hazardous Materials Unit also responded.

"We're not sure if it was inside or outside [the school], so we made a safe call in conjunction with [Chief Foligno] to evacuate the building," Schools Supt. Anthony Greco said. "Parents have been notified."

Nearly a dozen Bergen County sheriff's officers raced to the scene along with police, firefighters and ambulances from neighboring towns, including Clifton, Fair Lawn, Glen Rock, Lodi, Lyndhurst and Paterson.

Authorities couldn't immediately say whether or not carbon monoxide was to blame. They shut down all the main units and had crews inspecting the smaller ones, as well.

Earlier this year, the state Department of Community Affairs required any building with fuel-burning appliances to have CO detectors installed no later than Sept. 3.

The regulations stem from a November 2015 state amendment expanding requirements that carbon monoxide detection equipment be installed in all multi-unit private structures, as well as commercial and public buildings --including schools.

Called the "Korman and Park's Law," the measure is named for Noel Korman, a champion skateboarder, and his friend, Alice Park, who were victims of carbon monoxide poisoning in a Passaic building that contained multiple art studios and rehearsal spaces.

The regulations allow public schools to comply with the law through the use of battery-operated carbon monoxide detectors.

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