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ADEQ Releases Schools Chemical Management Toolkit to Assist Schools in Maintaining Safe Classroom Environment

PHOENIX (Sept. 27, 2012) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today the release of a 60-page schools chemical management toolkit publication to assist school districts throughout the state in managing chemicals used at schools.

An online version of the toolkit is available in English at http://www.azdeq.gov/ceh/download/sc_toolkit.pdf and in Spanish at http://www.azdeq.gov/ceh/download/sc_toolkit-SP.pdf

The toolkit was developed to provide Arizona schools with basic information and resources needed to remove unnecessary, outdated or unknown chemicals from school labs and storage places. It provides guidance to prevent chemical mismanagement of incidents in schools and also serves as an educational tool to heighten awareness of the importance of proper chemical management.

“This is an important compilation of guidelines, resources and procedures to help schools around the state effectively oversee the use of chemicals and make sure that students and school personnel are protected,” said ADEQ Director Henry Darwin. “When chemicals are mismanaged they create risk from spills, fires and other accidental exposures in and around schools.”

The toolkit provides a roadmap for a school district or individual school to establish a school chemical management program and avoid hazardous chemical incidents. The program identifies, manages and prevents hazards through all stages of chemical purchasing, storage, use and disposal.

The release of the toolkit follows on the heels of a successful ADEQ-sponsored cleanup last month at three schools in the Nogales Unified School District funded by a \$54,716 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. More than 200 pounds of chemicals were collected and disposed of in an environmentally safe manner.

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