



May 23, 2014

For Immediate Release

Contact: DOA Communications, 608-266-7362

GEFI Building Update – May 23, 2014

Here is an update on the GEFI building, which includes how employees have been able to access the building. I'm [Stephanie Marquis] also including information about where employees will be located on Tuesday. Please note that I [Stephanie Marquis] do not expect to issue any updates over the weekend.

ALTERNATE WORK LOCATIONS

As you may know, DOA Facilities Management (DFM) has been identifying alternate sites where employees will be located while the GEFI building is closed. Today, I sent both DWD and DCF information to distribute to their employees which outlines where employees will be located on Tuesday (employees are already located in some of these alternate sites). That document is attached.

DFM is also working diligently to get all necessary furniture, equipment, telephone lines and network connections to these multiple sites. We know that some employees will be located in initial work spaces that may not be optimal, and we'll address those situations as quickly as possible. We are working to get all necessary furniture, equipment, telephone lines and network connections to multiple sites. We have asked staff to notify their supervisor or manager about the supplies, materials or equipment they need so that DOA Facilities Management we can continue to monitor and roll-out needed resources.

EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO GEFI

- Attached is the protocol that DOA sent to DWD and DCF to distribute to their employees about accessing the GEFI building. Only GEFI State employees and other authorized personnel are allowed into GEFI.
- Employees can enter the building to box or retrieve personal belongings or work items so that the remediation/clean-up efforts can continue to move along efficiently. If they do not wish to pack up their personal belongings or work items, cleaning staff will do so for them.
- We have asked employees not to bring GEFI personal items to their alternate work location so we can avoid spreading a smoke smell or soot. Please see the attached access process for additional information.
- As you will see, there are NO hazards in the building. Employees are offered a mask and gloves when they enter the building because GEFI still smells like smoke and there is soot in some areas.
- DWD and DCF staff have already retrieved some items for both agencies, but we also noted that staff from the 1st or 2nd floors could retrieve additional work files, but they may have a faint smoke smell, but files are not hazardous. We will make future arrangements to have these files cleaned to remove the smoke smell before the files are taken back into the reopened GEFI.
- Employees located on the 3rd and 4th have been asked not to remove items from their work area because they were closer to the fire and they have a stronger odor and may contain soot. We will clean the files and deliver them to their alternate work site.

- MORE -

COST

I do not have a cost figure at this time as the damage is still being assessed, remediation has started but has not been completed, etc. I know folks are interested in that figure, and I'll include that information in my media updates when I have more information.

Employee Work Time

- I have been asked by multiple media outlets about a policy related to how employees are entering time. For your background, the employee time is being logged consistently as to how things run in an unexpected building closure, such as a snow day. Here is a link to the Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook Chapter that is to be followed in the event of emergency closures or inclement weather (absences are under section 736.060): <http://oser.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=7346>
- Employees working from home or other state offices are entering their work time as normal while they work from other locations.
- When possible, employees are also able to make up work time rather than use paid or unpaid leave. For example, employees who are retrieving their work or personal items from the building can record their hours in the building as work time, including any time spent in the building this weekend.
- If employees have some hours they are unable to work, they have the CHOICE to (1) use vacation, personal holiday, sabbatical or accrued comp time as paid leave (sick leave cannot be used), or (2) they can take leave without pay if they want to save their vacation time. Employees have the choice to which time they enter – they have not been directed what to take.
- As previously noted, no one has been furloughed or laid off. We would notify employees if we were going to furlough or lay off employees, and that has not happened.

Attachments:

- GEFI building update – getting personal items and materials from building
- GEFI building update 5.23.14 (email issued to DWD and DCF employees)



GEFI building update - getting personal items
5.23.14.pdf



GEFI building update
5.23.14.pdf

- END -