

# Air Monitoring

## Washington DC Processing and Distribution Center Brentwood

*This fact sheet is one in a series of fact sheets providing information on the anthrax decontamination activities at the Washington DC Processing and Distribution Center Brentwood.*

### What is air monitoring?

Air monitoring is the testing of air samples to determine if there are any contaminants present in the air we are breathing. If detected, the testing also determines the concentrations of the contaminants, revealing if they are or are not harmful to our health. For the anthrax decontamination effort, we are testing the air inside and outside of the Brentwood Facility for the concentration level of chlorine dioxide.

### What will keep the chlorine dioxide inside the building?

The entire building has gone through an extensive sealing process to prevent the escape of chlorine dioxide to the atmosphere. The windows have been sealed with foil backed foam insulation; cracks have been sealed with expanding foam or silicone caulking; and the skylights, loading docks, and building openings have been sealed with poly-sheeting and foil tape.



### How will the air inside of the building be monitored?

The air inside of the building must be tested to ensure that the proper concentration of chlorine dioxide is reached in order to kill the anthrax spores. During the fumigation procedure, real-time and slightly delayed-time air samples will be taken and analyzed in a mobile laboratory that will be present at the facility. Additionally, sensors will be installed through the walls to get real time readings on relative humidity. Relative humidity is a crucial factor in ensuring that the chlorine dioxide bonds with the anthrax spores to kill them.

### How will the air outside of the building be monitored?

The air outside of the building will be tested at selected fixed points. These points are selected based on prevailing winds and where people live. In addition, there will be a mobile unit circling the area taking random air samples and analyzing them using real-time methods. The analytical methods being used are so sensitive that they can detect very small amounts of chlorine dioxide.

A weather station is being erected on the upper roof and will be connected to a computer for constant updates on wind direction, temperature, and barometric pressure. This will allow sampling personnel to know where a potential leak may disperse and determine areas for constant monitoring.