

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
AIR QUALITY DIVISION
ACTIVITY REPORT: Self Initiated Inspection

U11161246237816

FACILITY: Fire Findings Laboratory		SRN / ID: U111612462
LOCATION: 2026 Plaza Drive		DISTRICT: Kalamazoo
CITY: Benton Harbor		COUNTY: BERRIEN
CONTACT: Nathan Dwyer , Fire Investigator		ACTIVITY DATE: 12/02/2016
STAFF: Matthew Deskins	COMPLIANCE STATUS: Compliance	SOURCE CLASS:
SUBJECT: Unscheduled self initiated inspection.		
RESOLVED COMPLAINTS:		

On December 2, 2016 AQD Staff (Matt Deskins) went to conduct an unannounced self-initiated inspection of the Fire Findings Laboratory (FLL) in Benton Harbor, Berrien County. FFL does not have any permits issued to them by the AQD but do to the nature of their business, staff wanted to ensure that they weren't conducting any open burning for test purposes and to see if any of their activities would require an air permit. Staff departed the district office at approximately 10:00 a.m.

Staff arrived in the vicinity of FFL at approximately 11:15 a.m. Prior to entering the building, staff walked around to see if there was any evidence of FLL conducting any burning and/or having a burning pad but did not find anything. FLL is located in area with a lot of stores and other businesses nearby so you would think if they were to burn anything someone would have called in a complaint by now. Staff then proceeded toward the building entrance. Staff had to press a button to let someone know staff was at the door and an employee came to greet staff. Staff introduced them self and stated the purpose of the visit. The employee then said that staff would probably want to talk with Nate Dwyer (Fire Investigator) and she went to get him. Nate came out a few minutes later and staff again introduced them self, stated the purpose of the visit, and gave him a business card. Nate then asked what staff needed to see or do? Staff mentioned that they would like to sit down with him and discuss what FLL does and then take a walk through of the facility. Nate said alright and he led staff to a conference room. The following is a summary of staff's conversation with Nate as well as facility operations.

According to Nate, FLL investigates the cause of fires from evidence brought back by their investigators from fire scenes. FLL employs 3 investigators, 2 support staff, and 1 part time employee. Their regular business hours are M-F from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. although the investigators hours will vary. FLL's clients are typically insurance companies, manufacturers, attorneys, and the occasional private homeowner. Nate said that they don't do any open burning on site and that the lab consists of lab equipment and tools that are used for investigating fires. He said they do train fire departments but anything that may be burned is done off-site and the responsibility of the fire department. Nate went on to mention that every 3 years or so they hold a seminar where they do demonstrate a chimney fire, but it only lasts for 5 to 10 minutes. Staff then went on a tour of the lab and didn't note any items of concern or anything that would require an air permit. Staff thanked Nate for his time and departed at approximately 12:00 noon.

NAME Matt Deskins

DATE 12-5-16

SUPERVISOR MA 12/5/2016