

Health Survey Summary of Marsh Fork Elementary School Students Sundial, West Virginia

After hearing parents of Marsh Fork Elementary students express concerns about their children's health, Coal River Mountain Watch wanted to see if these were isolated incidents or if there was a trend. After numerous failed request to various state agencies and government representatives to look into this issue, Coal River Mountain Watch decided to conduct its own health survey in the Marsh Fork Elementary School district.

This survey was conducted over a period of 3 weeks beginning the first week of May 2005. Those who participated in conducting the survey and their organization affiliation are as follows:

Julia Bonds, Outreach Coordinator, Coal River Mountain Watch
Ed Wiley, Volunteer, Coal River Mountain Watch
Sarah Haltom, Communications Coordinator, Coal River Mountain Watch
Bo Webb, Volunteer Organizer / Board Member, Coal River Mountain Watch
Abraham Mwaura, Organizer, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Michael Morrison, Volunteer, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Scott Straight, Organizer, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Tonya Adkins, Marshall University / Member Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition

Those who participated in conducting the survey were trained and instructed to only ask the questions on the survey and record the answers.

**230 students were enrolled at Marsh Fork Elementary at the time of the survey.
The following results were obtained from the data collected.**

125 households were surveyed.

Of those 125 households, 60 households had children that attended the school.

53 of the 60 households with children attending the school were found to have children with health problems. (88%)

48 of these 53 households were found to have children with respiratory related problems such as asthma and chronic bronchitis. (91%)

43 of these 48 households that were found to have respiratory problems also complained of headaches, nausea, or just not feeling well at school, but better after being home for a while. (81%)

18 of the 53 households with children found to have health problems also were found to have learning difficulties at the school. (34%)

22 of the 53 households with children found to have health problems also complained of conditions at the school that included either dust, coal dust, unusual smells, noise, or blasting from the coal mining site located behind and above the school. (41%)