

Parker Middle School contractor nominated to 'Dirty Dozen' list

READING - The construction company which built the new Parker Middle School that was dedicated on October 26, has been nominated to be placed on the state's "Dirty Dozen" list of companies that pollute and/or cause safety hazards at sites.

The TLT Construction Company, which has offices in Wakefield, was given the nomination by the Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health. The list, which is expected to be released sometime in mid-November, is currently being compiled by the Massachusetts Toxics Center.

In addition to the Parker Middle School, the company has also worked on schools in

Gloucester and Georgetown, where it is currently involved in a \$21.5 million renovation of the middle and high school, and two elementary schools, according to published reports.

During construction at the Parker Middle School, there was a fire at the site, and after the flames were extinguished a portion of the building collapsed. The fire was started when a spark from construction work ignited a wall in the auditorium. Though it was a small fire, it drew the anger of many within the fire department because TLT workers had reportedly cut reinforcing steel in the building, which could have collapsed.

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while firefighters were still inside.

TLT also received complaints at the Georgetown site which accused the company of mishandling asbestos, a carcinogen, as well as blocking fire exits and diminishing noise and air quality

at the school.

According to published reports, when Georgetown's health agent Karen Springer inspected the site she found asbestos insulation hanging over a desk; fumes from construction vehicles were entering classrooms; a fire exit that was

blocked by construction debris; and poor air quality. About 20 students walked out of the high school in protest of the conditions, and work was later stopped by Georgetown Building Inspector Charles Brett until TLT made improvements at the site.