

## **Valley Center Public Library Environmental Safety Policy**

**Board Approved May 13, 2019**

It is the responsibility of Valley Center Public Library and Library users to help maintain a healthy and clean environment for all Library patrons and to protect the Library's, the City's, and the taxpayers' investments in Library collections, equipment, and other property.

In order to fulfill their responsibility, the Library may restrict a patron's ability to borrow materials and/or to visit the Library facility when such use may jeopardize the health and cleanliness of the building, collections, and other patrons.

### **Examples:**

Situations where borrowing of materials may be suspended include, but are not limited to:

- Evidence that items on loan to a patron may have been returned with insects that are known to be damaging to library materials, or that can result in pest infestations in the Library facility, e.g. roaches, silverfish, bed bugs, some types of beetles. This suspension will extend to all patrons living at the residence of the borrower.
- Evidence that items on loan to a patron may have been returned with bodily fluids (human or animal urine, feces, blood, vomit, etc.) and or chemical residues (including meth).

Situations where access to the Library facility may be suspended include, but are not limited to:

- Patrons or patron possessions with fleas, lice, bed bugs, etc.
- Patrons with clothing that is stained with human or animal feces, blood, vomit, etc., or that has the odor of the above or other excessive body odor.

### **Suspension of Library Privileges:**

Should it become necessary to suspend Library privileges of a patron in order to protect Library collections, facilities, staff or other library patrons, notification of the suspension will be made by the Director, Office Manager, or Library Board of Directors. The initial notification may be made by telephone, but an additional letter informing the patron of the suspension and reinstatement process will be mailed no later than 7 days following the telephone call. Patrons may appeal their suspension to the Library Board of Directors.

Patron privacy is important to VCPL. Patron identification will be kept confidential unless required for legal purposes.

### **Reinstatement of Library Privileges:**

Patrons with suspensions due to Environmental Safety reasons may request reinstatement of privileges upon demonstrating that the situation that resulted in the suspension has been resolved.

For reinstatement requests relating to suspensions due to pest infestation, decisions will be made based upon evidence showing that the address in question has been inspected with no sign of infestation or that the residence has been successfully treated. Confirming information may include copies of receipts for treatment, a letter from a licensed pest control company, or a written statement from the owner or property manager of a multi-family rental residence.

### **Damages:**

Items returned with insect infestation or other such damage may require disposal. Items damaged by treatment attempted by non-Library personnel or Library contractors will be the borrower's responsibility. Patrons may be required to reimburse VCPL for the costs of those items, plus a processing fee. These charge must be paid before a patron may borrow items or use patron computers.

### **Insect Infestation Prevention:**

VCPL staff actively work toward the prevention and containment of insects and other pests that may threaten the facility, collection, or patrons and staff. Staff is trained in detection and containment, and the Library Board and Library Director regularly examine and update policies and procedures according to best practices.

Staff will routinely inspect all incoming materials including those returned at the circulation desk, in the book drops and through inter-library loan, for signs that pests are or have been present. These signs include live or dead insects, eggs, nymphs, feces and spotting.

Materials returned to VCPL with evidence of pests will be treated or disposed of at the discretion of the Library management. Discarded items will be considered lost or damaged. Any materials returned by a patron that show evidence of pests will result in immediate suspension of Library privileges and for any patrons at the same residence. Suspension will be lifted after the patron presents proof that the residence has been successfully treated.

### **Patron Protocol:**

Library patrons must cease to borrow materials from VCPL if they are experiencing an infestation in their residence that could cause VCPL materials to become contaminated. In the event that a patron suspects contamination in borrowed materials, the patron must immediately:

- If the materials are found inside the Library, bring them to a staff member and inform staff of their suspicions.
- If the materials are outside the Library and in possession of a patron, place the materials into a sealable plastic bag, return sealed bag directly to a staff member and inform staff of the

problem. DO NOT use the book drops. Patron identity will be kept confidential unless required for legal purposes.

**Protocol for Donations:**

Donors must inspect materials for evidence of live or dead pests prior to donating to VCPL. Dispose of any materials that are suspicious.