

# GLOBAL INDOOR HEALTH NETWORK

"WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS"

<http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com>

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## GIHN New Member

**Patti Schmidt** lives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and she experienced mold illness firsthand. She is now working as a Health Coach specializing in coaching people with chronic illness--especially those with chronic illness caused by water-damaged buildings.

## U.S. Supreme Court Issues Ruling on Moldy Washing Machines

The U.S. Supreme Court let consumers press ahead with class-action lawsuits alleging that washing machines made by Whirlpool Corp. developed a smelly buildup of mold. The justices today turned away appeals from Whirlpool in a case filed by Ohio customers and from Sears Holdings Corp. in a suit by consumers in six states over Whirlpool-made machines. Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

## Hidden Mold in Dream Home Points to Larger Industry Concern

The beautiful two-story stone-faced Sheboygan County home with the impressive Lake Michigan view was supposed to be a retreat for Mequon resident John Liebl and his wife, Beth, once they retire.

Instead, the couple are now seeing their retirement savings vanish to remedy and replace rotten exterior walls. The Liebls' contractors say it's a warning tale to every home buyer about the damage that can result when cheap building materials are combined with questionable workmanship.

Bruce Nordgren, partner in Mequon-based Northgreen Builders LLC, which is now rebuilding the Oostburg-area home, calls the Liebls' experience "a prime example of what's going on in our industry."

**He predicts many more mold cases will come to light in the coming years.**

**"I've been building for 37 years now. I'm horrified by what we're doing as a construction industry," Nordgren said. "We've got to start looking at some of the things we're doing."**

**"In the last five years, we've repaired so much stuff. It's the products that we're using. It's the techniques, it's all kinds of things. If it doesn't change, (this) is going to happen."**

A large part of the problem at the Liebls' home, Nordgren and the couple's mold remediator say, was the use of OSB board and how it was installed. Since OSB was introduced to the market in the 1970s, it has gained 75% of the market share over plywood — largely because of its consistency and cheaper price.

**Nordgren said he stopped using OSB 15 years ago because it's nearly impossible to prevent water from getting to it.**

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

See *New Research on Fibromyalgia* on page 2

## New Research Sheds Light on Mysterious Fibromyalgia Pain

Fibromyalgia affects 1% to 5% of Americans, mainly women, but until recently, scientists had no idea what might be causing its severe and mysterious pains. For decades, doctors told patients their agony was imaginary, the result of emotional hysteria, not a physical ailment.

But this year, researchers finally began to get a handle on the condition.

**"What's happened is in 2013 there's been this absolute explosion of papers," says neurologist Anne Louise Oaklander at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. "The whole view on this has shifted."**

**Oaklander published two studies this year showing that half or more of the cases of fibromyalgia are really a little-known condition affecting the nerves. People with this small-fiber neuropathy get faulty signals from tiny nerves all over the body, including internal organs, causing an odd constellation of symptoms from pain to sleep and digestive problems that overlap with symptoms of fibromyalgia.**

Neuroscientist Frank Rice and a team based at Albany Medical College also discovered that there are excessive nerve fibers lining the blood vessels of the skin of fibromyalgia patients — **removing any doubt that the condition is physically real.**

These fibers in the skin can sense blood flow and control the dilation and constriction of vessels to regulate body temperature, Rice says, as well as direct nutrients to muscles during exercise. Women have more of these fibers than men, he says, perhaps explaining why they are much more likely to get fibromyalgia.

"Blood vessel nerve fibers are an important target that haven't been in our line of thinking to date in chronic pain conditions," says Rice, now president and chief scientist at Integrated Tissue Dynamics LLC, a biotechnology research company in Rensselaer, N.Y.

## Fibromyalgia Research

### New Research Sheds Lights on Mysterious Fibromyalgia Pain (continued)

**This new understanding of fibromyalgia will hopefully lead to better treatments, Rice and Oaklander say.**

Rheumatologist Richard Chou says there is some preliminary evidence that the nerve damage is caused by the immune system.

**Fibromyalgia's constellation of symptoms is very similar to those of chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) and Gulf War syndrome, which Oaklander's group also studies. "If someone has more of one symptom than another they might call it one thing, like chronic fatigue, but it's not clear that these are different," Oaklander says.**

Carolyn DiSilva of Maynard, Mass., one of Oaklander's patients, says she was stunned to learn that she had small-fiber neuropathy caused by an overactive immune system, instead of fibromyalgia.

"I think a lot of people, they get a blanket diagnosis as fibromyalgia because doctors don't know what's wrong with them," says DiSilva, 47, who has suffered from unexplained pains for about 14 years.

Understanding what's causing her pain has helped her, she says, because doctors and others take her problems seriously, instead of dismissing her as they used to do.

And now that it's clear DiSilva has an immune problem, Oaklander has put her on intravenous immunoglobulin treatments — instead of conventional fibromyalgia therapy — which seem to be making a profound difference in her health.

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

See *New Law Proposed in Scotland* on page 3

## New Law Proposed to Reclaim Costs for Treatment of Illness Caused by Asbestos (Scotland)

Scottish health boards could be given the power to reclaim the cost of treating people from killer conditions caused by exposure to asbestos.

A new bill was launched allowing the NHS to claw back the costs of caring for people who contracted industrial diseases like fatal mesothelioma, including those who worked on the Clyde shipyards.

The Recovery of Medical Costs for Asbestos Diseases (Scotland) Bill is the culmination of years of campaigning by Clydeside Action on Asbestos and Nationalist West of Scotland MSP Stuart McMillan.

More than £20million a year is thought to be spent by NHS Scotland diagnosing and treating people suffering from the effects of asbestos exposure - around £60,000 per patient. Campaigners say the number of people receiving treatment is continuing to increase.

The bill will enable the NHS and palliative care services to re-coup those costs from insurance companies who have already settled civil claims with victims. The costs of treatment will be calculated from initial diagnosis.

There is currently provision in Scots law for the NHS to claim from insurers the costs of treating people involved in accidents but no recovery system exists for those who have contracted industrial diseases.

The new law could open up insurance claims for other work-related conditions.

Phyllis Craig, chairwoman of Clydeside Action on Asbestos, said: "We are urging the Scottish Parliament to address this issue as a priority.

"The responsibility for meeting these costs rests with the employers who exposed their employees to asbestos. It is only just that the employers have to meet the costs of care that result from their negligence."

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.



## Half of Coventry's Schools Contain Asbestos (United Kingdom)

Some 50 of the 96 council-run schools in the city contain the material which can be dangerous if disturbed.

Out of the 80 primary schools in the city, 44 were shown to contain asbestos which has been linked to causing diseases such as terminal mesothelioma and often fatal lung cancer.

Six of the city's eight special schools – caring for youngsters with physical or learning disabilities – were also found to contain the material.

The data was revealed following a Freedom of Information request by the Telegraph to the council.

Health and safety chiefs say the presence of asbestos alone should not cause concern – as long as it is managed properly

Asbestos was used extensively as a building material in Britain from the 1950s to the 1990s and is linked to around 4,500 deaths a year. Serious, often fatal diseases, can be caused when asbestos fibres are released from materials, becoming airborne and get inhaled.

Asbestos has an average 30 to 40-years latency period between exposure to asbestos fibres and the onset of disease.

There are strict legal duties on schools to manage asbestos containing materials.

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

See *Research Papers* on page 4

## Research Papers

Check out this new research paper by Dr. Frederick Guilford and Dr. Janette Hope.

### Deficient Glutathione in the Pathophysiology of Mycotoxin-Related Illness

**Abstract:** Evidence for the role of oxidative stress in the pathophysiology of mycotoxin-related illness is increasing. The glutathione antioxidant and detoxification systems play a major role in the antioxidant function of cells. Exposure to mycotoxins in humans requires the production of glutathione on an “as needed” basis. Research suggests that mycotoxins can decrease the formation of glutathione due to decreased gene expression of the enzymes needed to form glutathione. Mycotoxin-related compromise of glutathione production can result in an excess of oxidative stress that leads to tissue damage and systemic illness. The review discusses the mechanisms by which mycotoxin-related deficiency of glutathione may lead to both acute and chronic illnesses.

Click [here](#) to download and read the entire paper.

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Steve Temes brought this paper to our attention.

### Chemesthesis and the Chemical Senses as Components of a “Chemofensor Complex”

**Abstract:** An important function of the chemical senses is to warn against dangerous biological and chemical agents in the environment. The discovery in recent years of “taste” receptor cells outside the oral cavity that appear to have protective functions has raised new questions about the nature and scope of the chemical senses in general and of chemesthesis in particular. The present paper briefly reviews these findings within the context of what is currently known about the body’s chemically sensitive protective mechanisms, including nonsensory processes that help to expel or neutralize threatening agents once they have been encountered. It is proposed that this array of defense mechanisms constitutes a “chemofensor complex” in which chemesthesis is the most ubiquitous, functionally diverse, and interactive chemosensory component.

Click [here](#) to read the entire report.



## Research Papers (continued)

### An elevated pro-inflammatory cytokine profile in multiple chemical sensitivity

**Background:** Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) is a medically unexplained condition characterized by reports of recurrent unspecific symptoms attributed to exposure to low levels of common volatile chemicals. The etiology of MCS is poorly understood, but dysregulation of the immune system has been proposed as part of the pathophysiology.

**Objective:** To compare plasma levels of cytokines in Danish MCS individuals with a healthy, sex and age-matched control group.

**Method:** Blood samples were obtained from 150 unexposed MCS individuals and from 148 age and sex-matched healthy controls. Plasma concentrations of 14 cytokines, chemokines and growth and allergen-specific IgE were measured. All participants completed a questionnaire including questions on MCS, psychological distress, morbidities and medication use at the time of the study.

**Results:** Plasma levels of interleukin-1b, -2, -4, and -6 were significantly ( $P < 0.001$ ) increased in the MCS group compared with controls, tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  was borderline significantly ( $P = 0.05$ ) increased and interleukin-13 was significantly decreased ( $P < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** MCS individuals displayed a distinct systemic immune mediator profile with increased levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines and interleukin-2 and inverse regulation of Th2 associated cytokines interleukin-4 and interleukin-13 suggestive of low-grade systemic inflammation, along with a deviating Th2-associated cytokine response not involving IgE-mediated mechanisms.

See *EPA Shuts Down Building* on page 5



## EPA Shuts Down Demolition of Old Goodyear Building Due to Asbestos

“That’s the Worst We’ve Ever Seen.”

That was the comment yesterday from EPA officials, when they inspected suspected asbestos contamination of the former Goodyear Building (KI Building) located at 200 Commerce Drive in Madisonville, Kentucky.

SurfKY News met with city officials Thursday afternoon about the situation at the building, which has been designated a “Hot Spot” by the EPA.

Frank Wallace, City of Madisonville Building official, said that he saw no evidence of employees being protected from the asbestos they were working in. Wallace said that employees were walking in four to six inches of friable asbestos as they were dismantling the boilers.

“It appeared to me that they had what appeared to be asbestos in every corner and crack and crevice in the building,” Wallace said. “There were even signs that said ‘contains asbestos’ on the piping insulation that they were cutting and taking off.”

Wallace again ordered work to be halted and notified EPA officials.

“They looked, took samples and photos,” Wallace said. “The officials commented, ‘That’s the worst we’ve ever seen.’ The officials then ordered the site shut down and ordered employees out of the building and off the site. Division of Water started monitoring storm water. The site is to be locked down and secured. The Division of Waste Management and Division of Water are investigating.”

Wallace estimates that employees have had five weeks of heavy exposure to asbestos. EPA officials are expected to recommend health assessment of all employees exposed.

Additionally, families of workers may have been exposed to the cancer-causing asbestos. Workers can carry asbestos on clothing and shoes exposing others.

“I’ve been doing this for 30 years and I have never seen anything like it,” said Wallace.

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.



## Rihanna Wins Key Point in Lawsuit Over Leaky Mansion

Rihanna has won a key point in her legal war over a \$6.9 million Beverly Hills mansion she bought that leaked, ruining her custom-fitted sound system and sprouting mold on her designer clothes.

In depositions in LA last week, the seller admitted he’d informed brokers Prudential California Realty of problems with the home, but said Prudential didn’t apprise Rihanna of them before she bought it in 2009. She’s suing for \$8.5 million.

A source close to the star — who has since off-loaded the home and moved to a rented apartment in downtown Manhattan — tells Page Six: “It doesn’t rain much in California, but when it did, it rained inside the house. Rihanna never got to move in, but she started modifying it, building a custom closet and fitting in state-of-the-art audio. She didn’t know the house would leak, and the water ruined the new sound system and grew mold on the walls and on some of her clothes.”

According to the original suit filed in 2011, “In or about January 2010, the property was subject to a moderate rainstorm . . . the rainwater pooled on the second-floor balcony and seeped into numerous rooms . . . numerous construction defects, which existed at the time [Rihanna] purchased the property were not made known to [her].”

The Bahamian singer is suing the former owner, the inspector, the brokers and engineers who worked on the house for fraud, negligence and breach of contract.

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

See *Washington County Courthouse* on page 6

## Washington County Courthouse Condemned (Florida)

The floods of the past summer caused of millions of dollars of damage to Washington County (Florida) infrastructure, and when rainwater leaked into the county courthouse, it alerted officials to problems that led to the building's condemnation.

Not long after officials noticed the standing water in the basement, they also began to notice problems with the exterior of the building. Then, a roughly 800-pound chunk of stone fell from the top of the courthouse. Then they found rotten wood, water damage, peeling paint and mold.

**"We got back at least a dozen different strains of mold, five of which were deemed to be immediate health risks,"** said Circuit Judge Christopher Patterson, who spearheads a committee tasked with solving the courthouse dilemma.

When air quality tests of the Washington County Courthouse came back in December, officials shut it down and moved into temporary locations at an annex next door that also houses the Sheriff's Office and the county building a few blocks away.

The move resolved health concerns, but it created a raft of new problems. Evidence in criminal cases had to be relocated, as did tens of thousands of official records, some of which were coated with a visible layer of mold and will need to be cleaned.

**"We can't go back to that courthouse, based on what we now know,"** Patterson said during the steering committee's most recent meeting. **"It is such a health risk that there's nobody in this room that would want to put the general public back in there."**

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

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**Next Newsletter: April 1, 2014**



*Washington County Courthouse  
Condemned (Florida)*

## Mould Threatening Family's Health (U.K.)

Treena Wells, 39, has declared that there are mushrooms growing in her bathroom in her house in Leyton. The house, which she moved into in 2010, is owned by housing charity East Thames. Ms. Wells, who, along with her daughter, five-year-old Charlie, is asthmatic, says **they have had to not only put up with mushrooms but mildew, mould and damp throughout the house.**

According to Ms. Wells, her daughter is frequently ill as a result, which is affecting her schooling.

The blue carpet that is on the floor of the Leyton bathroom has allegedly turned black with the walls of the bedroom exhibiting damp. **Neighbours have confirmed that previous tenants were moved out because of the damp conditions, with one dying from an illness of the lungs.** Ms. Wells, who has fought off pneumonia, is concerned that the illness will return because of the conditions.

Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

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## Quick Links:

**Website:** <http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com>

**Health Effects:**  
[http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/health\\_effects.html](http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/health_effects.html)

**Position Statement:**  
[http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/files/GIHN\\_position\\_statement\\_Revised\\_12\\_17\\_2012.pdf](http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/files/GIHN_position_statement_Revised_12_17_2012.pdf)

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