

GLOBAL INDOOR HEALTH NETWORK

"WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS"

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GIHN New Member

Sanjay Gupta lives in Canada. He works for "Got Mold? Disaster Recovery Services." He has been researching and writing about mold and asbestos since 2011.

Please join me in welcoming Sanjay.

Couple fights insurer "Insurance Australia Group" over mold infestation

A couple who claim they have been unable to live in their home for more than a year because it is infested with toxic mould are fighting an insurance giant over storm cover. Robert Guerin and Bronwyn Williams have taken legal action against Insurance Australia Group, and fear others could be living in contamination time bombs.

"Our life has been hijacked," Mr. Guerin said.

IAG is accused of botching a repair and aggravating the mould problem, then offering to settle for less than it would cost to make the East Malvern house safe.

The couple claims their home has been uninhabitable since late 2011, after water pooling beneath released massive concentrations of largely invisible airborne mould linked to allergic reactions, breathing problems and potential death.

The pair claim their home started reeking of mould about three weeks after a storm and they suffered peeling skin and irritation.

Maurice Blackburn principal John Berrill said the case was a classic example of an insurer trying to avoid contract obligations.

Mould levels beneath the home were allegedly as high as 277,000 spores per cubic metre of air - compared with 1000 for a "normal" level - after the insurer's organised repair and rebuild.

The couple allege they were told it was safe to return to their home in June last year, but their own independent tests uncovered excessively high internal mould levels.

"We would have been living in a death trap if we followed the advice," Ms. Williams said.

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

See *Neurosurgeons Sue Landlord* on page 2

Neurosurgeons Sue Landlord after Mold and Mildew Closes Their Building

A group of local neurosurgeons is suing their landlord for economic damages they claim came from environmental damages to the building they were leasing.

Southern Brain and Spine filed suit against Lillibridge Healthcare Services Inc. and East Jefferson General Hospital in the 24th Judicial District Court on Jan. 22.

Southern Brain and Spine claims the defendants as owners and operators of the building they inhabited did not timely remediate water damage in the building that resulted in mold and mildew.

The plaintiff alleges that due to the water damage and mold problems many of the rooms of the building could not be used. Southern Brain and Spine asserts that in Feb. 2012 a demolition service began renovating the affected rooms including removing moisture and mold and mildew damaged drywall.

The plaintiffs allege that during the demolition and renovation the other areas of the building were inadequately protected from mold and mildew spores.

The defendant is accused of failing to use ordinary care of maintenance, failing to adequately supervise demolition and remediation work, failing to finish renovation within reasonable time period, failing to adhere to standards necessary in a hot and humid environment, failing to timely remove damaged materials, failing to disclose dangers of using insufficient material in healthcare facilities, failing to hire contractors with necessary licenses and certificates, failing to engage in competent remediation, allowing contractors to apply chemicals to kill mold and mildew without the proper licenses and failing to correct deficiencies in the building's design.

An unspecified amount in damages is sought for disrupted business, lost profits, loss of use and economic damages.

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



Neurosurgeons sue landlord

Residents Fed Up with Moldy Walls and Leaky Windows in DR Horton Homes

Crumbling walls, leaky windows and mold.

Hundreds of Delray Beach residents at Bexley Park say they're the victims of a housing bust, that they're going to court demanding action from the builder they say is responsible, DR Horton.

Homeowner Peter Anuar says rainwater has seeped into his walls and led to mold, rotting wood, and sickness.

"We've had breathing, respiratory problems we've never had in our entire lives," said Anuar.

One of America's largest builders, Texas-based D.R Horton, has built hundreds of homes across Palm Beach County and tens of thousands across the country.

They've been sued at least twice in Palm Beach County over complaints of poor construction.

At Bexley Park, the HOA has filed suit over damage to 160 homes.

After three years, the HOA head says the lawsuit has gone nowhere because D.R. Horton has filed numerous counter motions against subcontractors who supposedly did the work.

Residents say this complex, which was built in 2005, is on the verge of driving its residents out.

They say they're tired of wondering what's lurking between their walls.

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

See *Microbial Secondary Metabolites* on page 3

Microbial Secondary Metabolites in School Buildings Inspected for Moisture Damage

The following [abstract](#) is from a new research paper by Pietzsch, et al.

Secondary metabolites produced by fungi and bacteria are among the potential agents that contribute to adverse health effects observed in occupants of buildings affected by moisture damage, dampness and associated microbial growth. However, few attempts have been made to assess the occurrence of these compounds in relation to moisture damage and dampness in buildings. This study conducted in the context of the HITEA project (Health Effects of Indoor Pollutants: Integrating microbial, toxicological and epidemiological approaches) aimed at providing systematic information on the prevalence of microbial secondary metabolites in a large number of school buildings in three European countries, considering both buildings with and without moisture damage and/or dampness observations. In order to address the multitude and diversity of secondary metabolites a large number of more than 180 analytes was targeted in settled dust and surface swab samples using liquid chromatography/mass spectrometry (LC/MS) based methodology.

While 42%, 58% and 44% of all samples collected in Spanish, Dutch and Finnish schools, respectively, were positive for at least one of the metabolites analyzed, frequency of detection for the individual microbial secondary metabolites – with the exceptions of emodin, certain enniatins and physcion – was low, typically in the range of and below 10% of positive samples. In total, 30 different fungal and bacterial secondary metabolites were found in the samples. Some differences in the metabolite profiles were observed between countries and between index and reference school buildings.

A major finding in this study was that settled dust derived from moisture damaged, damp schools contained larger numbers of microbial secondary metabolites at higher levels compared to respective dust samples from schools not affected by moisture damage and dampness. This observation was true for schools in each of the three countries, but became statistically significant only when combining schools from all countries and thus increasing the sample number in the statistical analyses.



Emily Smith has serious concerns for her children's health this winter. Jacob, 3, has liquefied silt pooling beneath his bedroom and Holly, 1, has a heart condition.

Silt Under Homes Threatens Health of Cantabrians (New Zealand)

Liquefied silt festering beneath Christchurch houses for the past two years could spark serious health concerns this winter.

Silt littered with fungi is piled up against the floorboards of some houses, causing them to rot. In other houses it has crept into the walls, causing mould to grow. Up to 100 tonnes of silt can be sucked out from beneath a house, removal experts say.

Affected homeowners have complained of bronchiolitis, unshakeable coughs, asthma and other health problems.

Housing New Zealand and the Earthquake Commission are removing silt from beneath the homes of those most vulnerable, but it is unknown how many Christchurch properties still require this to be done.

Christchurch medical officer of health Dr. Alistair Humphrey said silt pooling beneath homes could cause an array of health problems for Cantabrians.

He said silt held moisture well for long periods and as a consequence houses throughout the city were growing mould.

"If the liquefaction is deemed to be causing unhealthy living conditions - typically moisture, mould, mildew inside the dwelling, especially where the inhabitants are vulnerable - then this is given priority," Emson said.

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

See *Member Profile: Robert C. Brandys* on page 4

Member Profile: Robert C. Brandys

Bob Brandys has been in the environmental, safety and health field since 1968. He has worked in more than five different countries and has consulted for hundreds of clients around the world. His 45+ years of experience has spanned the history and implementation of OSHA and EPA in the US, the development of Indoor Air Quality as a recognized problem and, most recently, the realization that mold contamination of the indoor environment can be a health risk. Interestingly, Bob's first environmental sampling was using settled mold plates in 1964! (See photograph in the next column)

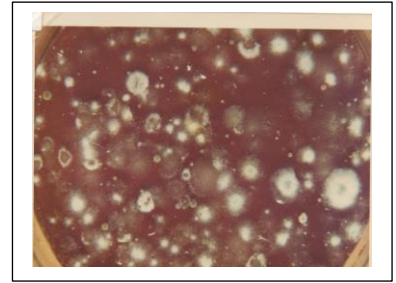
Bob spent the first 15 years of his career working in corporate safety and health, traveling to numerous countries and dealing with the regulatory and exposure standards and safety standards that were far more developed than those of the U.S.

Bob has a Ph.D. in Occupational Safety and Health, with a Master's Degree in Public Health, and dual undergraduate degrees in thermo-mechanical engineering and environmental engineering from the University of Illinois.

In 1984, Bob and his wife, Gail, started their own consulting firm Occupational and Environmental Health Consulting Services ([OEHCS](#)). The firm's goal was to provide State-of-the-Art consulting to solve clients' problems. As President, Bob worked on cutting-edge safety and health problems in industrial hygiene, emergency planning, industrial accident reporting and investigation software development, safety standard development, OSHA, EPA and building code issues, indoor air quality and sick building syndrome investigations, mold contamination and remediation, and many other areas.

Bob also has testified as a legal expert in a number of cases. One mold contamination case resulted in a \$3,200,000 reward. Another \$1,500,000 IAQ incident was caused by "power hitting cigarettes." Another IAQ situation resulted in \$4,000,000 in ventilation upgrades.

Throughout his career, Bob has taught various courses at the University of Illinois, Wilbur Wright College, and Moraine Valley Community College. He has also been a guest lecturer at the OSHA Training Institute and the National Safety Council.



Member Profile: Robert C. Brandys (cont'd)

Bob spent the last 10 years of his career (in addition to consulting) authoring [5 extensive books](#) to share his knowledge and experience with current safety, health and environmental professionals. His books were written to share his many years of global experience in the safety, health and environmental fields and his State-of-the-Art research. He has also given presentations at numerous IAQ conferences.

Bob has more than 30 publications that span his career ranging from air quality at Brookfield Zoo to the future of Indoor Air Quality. In the last few years, he was also an executive producer for video documentaries on electric vehicles from the early 1980s. His most recent video is a 40-minute documentary on "Mutant Mold in Outer Space" discussing the mold and bacteria that grew on the Apollo spacecraft and Mir Space station and the current mold and bacteria growing on the International Space Station.

Bob retired from his position as President of Occupational and Environmental Health Consulting Services, (OEHCS) Inc. in 2012. His wife has now taken over this position. OEHCS has offices located in Hinsdale, Illinois and Las Vegas, Nevada.

Today, although mostly retired, Bob is still conducting research in the area of performance assessment PHEAF equipment and respirable particulate and nanoparticle concentrations in the environment. He is currently working with the National Institute of Health on a HEPA filter research project and sponsors a free on-line database for analyzing respirable particle concentrations, available at this link: <http://www.oehcs.com/PHEAFParticlewebtool.html>.

Bob's retirement pursuits also include restoring classic cars and working on the engineering for an electric DeLorean he and his son built 4 years ago.

See *Lead Poisoning...doesn't discriminate* on page 5

Lead Poisoning and the Middle Class: The Silent Epidemic that Doesn't Discriminate

Erin Pavlica's family pediatrician had never recommended a blood lead test for any of her three children. And when she came in with her daughter Quinn in January, just after the girl's first birthday, the nurse initially brushed off her request for the test.

"She was like, 'Oh really? Why?'" recalled Pavlica, of St. Paul, Minn.

Pavlica pushed. Eventually, Quinn's lead level was checked and the result came back at just over 9 micrograms per deciliter of blood--above the 5-microgram-per-deciliter threshold, which is when the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers a child to have lead poisoning.

"I was super shocked," Pavlica said. "The doctor was as well."

Pavlica suggested that her pediatrician may have never thought to test for lead since her family was white, well-educated and fairly well-to-do -- not the demographic traditionally perceived as being at risk.

She said she probably never would have thought to ask had she not just seen a rough cut of the upcoming [documentary](#), "[MisLEAD](#)." The film warns that many parents and pediatricians are unaware of the dangers of lead -- where it's still found despite being banned from gasoline and house paint decades ago, and the extent of the damage it can inflict even in tiny amounts.

Tamara Rubin, the film's director, said she aims to dispel a long-standing misconception that lead poisoning is confined to low-income communities and to children who eat paint chips.

The lead industry itself originated and perpetuated that myth, according to experts. In their book, *Deceit and Denial*, David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz share evidence of the industry's insistence in the 1950s and 1960s that childhood lead poisoning was "primarily a problem of the eastern slums," and a "result of the lack of education, racial inferiority, and inattentiveness of poor people."



Lead Poisoning and the Middle Class: The Silent Epidemic that Doesn't Discriminate (cont'd)

She said that lead poisoning information continues to be primarily directed at low-income, multi-ethnic families. While these populations are very much at risk, she emphasized that they are not alone.

"There's still shame in talking about lead poisoning for those with middle, upper incomes," she added. "People aren't getting the information they need, and they aren't testing their children."

Rubin said she was once one of those parents unaware of the risks. Two of her children got violently ill after a contractor removed old paint during renovations of their home in Portland, Ore., and it took their pediatrician months to consider testing them for lead. The possibility never crossed Rubin's mind. Now, she has two kids -- and a whole family -- suffering the consequences.

Howard Mielke, an expert in lead poisoning at Tulane University School of Medicine, noted that lead typically affects the prefrontal cortex of the brain -- the section that controls decision-making and compulsive behavior. Not surprisingly then, lead poisoning has been tied to everything from higher crime rates and lower test scores to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism.

"Lead doesn't discriminate," she said. "It doesn't matter if you fit the demographic or if your doctor thinks your kid needs to be tested."

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

See *Pensioner Told to Paint Over Mold* on page 6

Pensioner Told to Paint Over Black Mould (U.K.)

A pensioner has been told to fix a damp problem in his house with a decorating kit after workmen refused to do it because of “health and safety”.

Malcolm Greenley has been complaining to Yorkshire Coast Homes (YCH) for over five years about black mould at his house on Helredale Road.

But he says workmen won’t rectify the problem on the staircase and in one of the upstairs bedrooms for “health and safety” reasons because they need scaffolding, but Mr. Greenley has been told to paint over the mould himself by YCH who has issued him with a voucher to pay for the paint. He told the Gazette: “I am not bothered about the decorating kit, I have done the whole house by myself before and I will do this. All I am asking is for someone to clean it up with the right equipment.”

“They want me to clean all that muck off but when me and my mate started stripping the paper off we could not breathe because of the spores and had to leave it as it was.”

Problems first started over ten years ago when Mr. Greenley’s wife was terminally ill. She moved into the back bedroom but complained it was “fusty”.

Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) which then managed housing stock before it was transferred to (YCH) put in an air brick which seemed to rectify the problem.

But over five years ago a deluge of rain left water pouring through the ceiling. A repair was made to the flashing around the chimney but the loft insulation was “wringing wet” and Mr. Greenley says workmen put new insulation on top of the damaged insulation and since then the ceiling and walls have been getting blacker and blacker.

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

Next Newsletter: May 1, 2013



Pensioner told to paint over black mould

More than 100 Nassau Coliseum Workers to File Lawsuits Over Asbestos Exposure

The situation surrounding the Nassau Coliseum just continues to get uglier.

More than 100 workers are alleging that long-term exposure to asbestos at Nassau Coliseum has made them seriously ill.

The plaintiffs represent current and former employees of the county-owned arena. They include electricians and carpenters who worked as independent contractors.

Attorney Joseph Dell told Newsday that 140 people have filed notices of claim, the first step toward filing a lawsuit. He says they’ll name the county, the New York Islanders and facility manager SMG.

The lawsuits will likely be consolidated into a class action. They’ll seek between \$500 million to \$1 billion.

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

Quick Links:

Website: <http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com>

Members:
<http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/members.html>

Position Statement:
http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/files/GIHN_position_statement_Revised_12_17_2012.pdf

Working Together for Healthy Indoor Environments