

GLOBAL INDOOR HEALTH NETWORK

WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS
IN OUR HOMES, SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES



April 1, 2016

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Mushrooms on the Walls and Collapsed Ceilings (United Kingdom)

Squalid, damp-ridden student digs and house-shares have been exposed following a council crackdown on rogue landlords. The council-led review found giant fungi growing up the wall, caved-in ceilings, rotting windows, etc. Click [here](#) to read the article.

Feds Investigating Conditions in NYC's Public Housing and Shelters

Federal prosecutors in Manhattan are conducting a sweeping investigation of environmental health and safety conditions, including cases of elevated blood lead levels, in public housing and homeless shelters and the possibility that the New York City housing and homeless agencies filed false claims to federal housing officials for payment related to the conditions.

The investigation was disclosed on Wednesday in a letter from the office of Preet Bharara, the United States attorney for the Southern District of New York, and in a judge's subsequent order, which were both filed in federal court.

The order, from Judge Deborah A. Batts, compels the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to produce information about the cases of elevated blood lead levels among residents and complaints of "unsafe, unsanitary or unhealthful conditions" in public housing and homeless shelters.

The documents said the health agency, in response to an earlier civil investigative demand from the prosecutors, had declined to provide the information without a judge's order, to avoid violating the city and state health codes.

Prosecutors also sought documents reflecting complaints about health conditions in public housing and homeless shelters, including those about "leaks, water damage, mold, particulate matter peeling paint in pre-1978 buildings, lead paint, rodents or insects, and all documents reflecting any response to, investigation of or evaluation of such complaints" by any city or state official or agency.

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

See *Water Main Break Floods Homes* page 2

Water Main Break Floods Roads and Homes (Troy, New York)

Troy officials have declared a State of Emergency after a massive water main break in Lansingburgh (in the City of Troy, New York, which is located on the eastern bank of the Hudson River).

"When I came down here I was like, 'oh my goodness.' This is bad," said Stephen Miller, a Troy resident.

Residents of Troy could do little but watch, as their city streets became submerged in flooding like they've never seen before.

"It has to be two or three feet of water at least," Miller said.

"It's a main that's about 100 years or more than 100-years-old," Madden said.

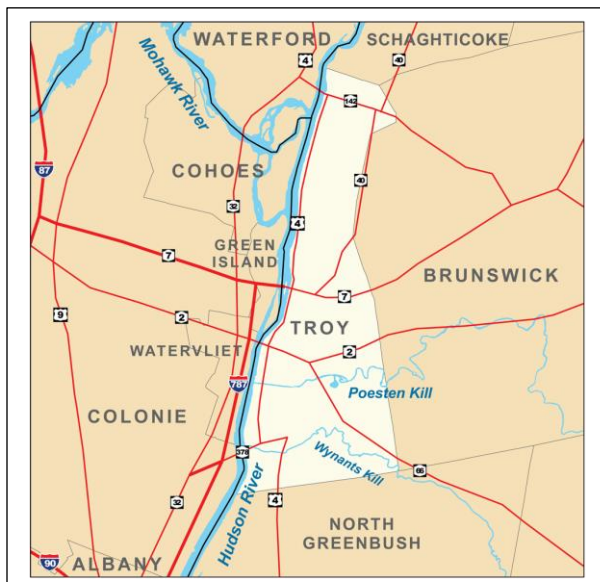
"It's not a good thing, I'll tell you that!" Miller said.

"There are a lot of people here in the area who can't shower, or do the dishes," Miller said.

"A lot of water damage to property, we'll assess that and deal with it as we get this under control," Madden said.

And Madden says with multiple locations under water, city employees are swamped.

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



Our results suggest that these three fungal species are already embedded in the materials, presumably in the paper/carton layer surrounding the gypsum core, before the panels reach the retailers/building site.

Pre-Contamination of New Gypsum Wallboard with Harmful Fungal Species

This new research paper was published on March 11, 2016. The title is "Pre-Contamination of New Gypsum Wallboard with Potentially Harmful Fungal Species."

Authors: Andersen B, Dosen I, Lewinska AM, Nielsen KF

Here's the abstract:

Gypsum wallboard is a popular building material, but is also very frequently overgrown by *Stachybotrys chartarum* after severe and/or undetected water damage.

The purpose of this study was to determine if *Stachybotrys* and other fungi frequently isolated from wet gypsum wallboard are already present in the panels directly from the factory. Surface disinfected gypsum discs were wetted with sterile water, sealed and incubated for 70 days.

The results showed that *Neosartorya hiratsukae* (\equiv *Aspergillus hiratsukae*) was the most dominant fungus on the gypsum wallboard followed by *Chaetomium globosum* and *Stachybotrys chartarum*.

Our results suggest that these three fungal species are already embedded in the materials, presumably in the paper/carton layer surrounding the gypsum core, before the panels reach the retailers/building site.

Click [here](#) to read the abstract and click [here](#) to read more about the study.

See *Reversal of Cognitive Decline* on page 3

Reversal of Cognitive Decline—A Novel Therapeutic Program

This page highlights three important research papers. Two of the papers are newly published. The third paper was published in 2014, but it discusses a treatment program that reverses cognitive decline, so it relates to this new paper on Inhalational Alzheimer's Disease.

Reversal of cognitive decline: A novel therapeutic program. Aging, September 2014, Vol. 6, No. 9. Author: Dale E. Bredesen.

Abstract: This report describes a novel, comprehensive, and personalized therapeutic program that is based on the underlying pathogenesis of Alzheimer's disease, and which involves multiple modalities designed to achieve metabolic enhancement for neurodegeneration (MEND).

The first 10 patients who have utilized this program include patients with memory loss associated with Alzheimer's disease (AD), amnesic mild cognitive impairment (aMCI), or subjective cognitive impairment (SCI). Nine of the 10 displayed subjective or objective improvement in cognition beginning within 3-6 months, with the one failure being a patient with very late stage AD. Six of the patients had had to discontinue working or were struggling with their jobs at the time of presentation, and all were able to return to work or continue working with improved performance. Improvements have been sustained, and at this time the longest patient follow-up is two and one-half years from initial treatment, with sustained and marked improvement.

These results suggest that a larger, more extensive trial of this therapeutic program is warranted. The results also suggest that, at least early in the course, cognitive decline may be driven in large part by metabolic processes. Furthermore, given the failure of monotherapeutics in AD to date, the results raise the possibility that such a therapeutic system may be useful as a platform on which drugs that would fail as monotherapeutics may succeed as key components of a therapeutic system.

Click [here](#) to read the full paper.



Inhalational Alzheimer's Disease—An Unrecognized and Treatable Epidemic

Inhalational Alzheimer's disease: an unrecognized—and treatable— epidemic. Aging, February 2016, Vol. 8, No. 2. Author: Dale E. Bredesen.

Abstract: Alzheimer's disease is one of the most significant healthcare problems today, with a dire need for effective treatment. Identifying subtypes of Alzheimer's disease may aid in the development of therapeutics, and recently three different subtypes have been described: type 1 (inflammatory), type 2 (non-inflammatory or atrophic), and type 3 (cortical). **Here I report that type 3 Alzheimer's disease is the result of exposure to specific toxins**, and is most commonly inhalational (IAD), a phenotypic manifestation of chronic inflammatory response syndrome (CIRS), due to biotoxins such as mycotoxins. The appropriate recognition of IAD as a potentially important pathogenetic condition in patients with cognitive decline offers the opportunity for successful treatment of a large number of patients whose current prognoses, in the absence of accurate diagnosis, are grave. Click [here](#) to read the full paper.

Fungi, Bacteria, Nano-particulates, Mycotoxins and Human Health in Water-Damaged Indoor Environments

J Comm Pub Health Nurs 2016, 2:2. Author: Thrasher JD.

Click [here](#) to read the full paper.

Scots Saved from “Half a Tonne of Toxins” since Smoking Ban (Scotland)

The smoking ban which came into force ten years ago today has saved Scots from breathing in more than half a tonne of toxic material, according to new research.

Health campaigners joined researchers to look at what a decade of smoke-free pubs and restaurants, and other public places, has meant for the adult population.

Action on Smoking and Health (Ash) Scotland worked with academics at the University of Aberdeen on the calculations.

They said second-hand smoke contains more than 4,000 chemical compounds, at least 250 of which are known to be toxic or to cause cancer. Of particular concern are the smallest particles, called PM2.5, which are invisible to the human eye but can linger in the air for hours and travel deep into the lungs.

Detailed measurements showed these levels inside pubs decreased by 86 per cent when smoking was moved outside.

The team said that using existing knowledge of how much air adults breathe and how much time they spend in a pub, this means the change in the amount of PM2.5 breathed in can be totaled over ten years.

The researchers said that, taken as a whole, the adult Scottish population has inhaled at least 600kg less of these tiny toxic particles because of smoke-free pubs.

Dr. Sean Semple, of the Scottish Centre for Indoor Air at the University of Aberdeen, said: “Scotland’s introduction of smoke-free public spaces was one of the most closely-studied pieces of public-health legislation ever, allowing us to look very carefully at the impact it had.

“This calculation shows that over half a tonne of toxic material would have been inhaled by the population over the past ten years if Scotland had not taken this bold step.”

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

Second-hand smoke contains more than 4,000 chemical compounds, at least 250 of which are known to be toxic or to cause cancer.

Judge and Prosecutor Want Mold Addressed in Selby Courthouse (South Dakota)

The presiding judge in South Dakota’s 5th Judicial District and the lead prosecutor for Walworth County say the County Commission needs to address mold in the courthouse.

The mold is causing respiratory problems in workers, according to Judge Scott Myren and State’s Attorney James Hare.

Commissioners had the building inspected after complaints surfaced last year. The inspection turned up no active mold, but a follow-up study suggested by the inspection company was never done.

Commissioner David Siemon also said there was no inspection for mold behind walls where water damage from broken pipes was most severe.

“If there was no mold in the judge’s chambers, why couldn’t I stand to be there for more than 20 minutes before I had to get out and breathe?” he said.

Myren said he and others continue to deal with chest congestion, wheezing and difficulty breathing.

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

Check out our May 2015 and December 2015 Newsletters for articles about the mold problems in the federal courthouse in Pensacola, Florida.

See *Formaldehyde and mold in Wildomar* on page 5

Formaldehyde (and Mold) May be Cause of Health Problems in Wildomar Housing Tract

A review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency of state and other investigations of chemical contamination in a Wildomar housing tract (in Wildomar, California) found that formaldehyde and another chemical may be responsible for some of the health effects reported by residents.

The review came more than three years after several families in the Autumnwood tract described illnesses that included headaches, rashes, nosebleeds, breathing difficulties, pneumonia and gastrointestinal problems. They said they suffered frequent colds, flu and sinus infections. Two women, both in their 30s, died, according to family members.

At least four families abandoned their homes in the tract, which is off Palomar Street and near an elementary school.

The EPA review found that formaldehyde and acrolein were found in indoor air and soil gas in 2012 and 2013 at levels above federal and state screening levels for “acute health effects,” said a December 23 letter from the EPA to the director of the state Department of Toxic Substances Control.

The presence of the two chemicals “could help explain some of the health effects reported by residents, particularly respiratory tract and eye irritation.” State agencies have reached similar conclusions, the letter said.

Thomas Ciccarelli, whose wife, Fatima, became suddenly ill with pneumonia and died in August of 2012, was unimpressed. **He said the EPA review offers nothing new and has no explanation for his wife’s death.**

The letter written by Enrique Manzanilla, the EPA’s regional superfund director, said, however, that “moisture, dampness, and/or mold may also have contributed to the residents’ reported health effects.”

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

The letter from the EPA’s regional superfund director said...

“moisture, dampness, and/or mold may also have contributed to the residents’ reported health effects”

Asbestos Cleanup in Sumner Courthouse (discovered during mold remediation)

Up to \$200,000 of emergency funds have been set aside to clean some of the asbestos found in the Sumner County courthouse and the adult probation building in Gallatin, officials said Tuesday.

The asbestos was first discovered in early March while cleanup crews were doing mold remediation as part of up to \$350,000 in upgrades to the courthouse on the Square and the Juvenile Courthouse in Gallatin. The mold accumulated due to leaking air conditioning units.

The mold remediation is on hold until the asbestos is cleaned. The Sumner County Commission approved up to \$350,000 on October 23, 2015 for HVAC rehabilitation and mold remediation work at courthouse and juvenile courthouse buildings in Gallatin.

Asbestos was found in the courthouse’s boiler room, as well as basement floor tile, air handler unit closet tile and ceiling spray at the adult probation building. Some water line insulation at the courthouse on the Square also tested positive for asbestos. Officials, however, will not be disturbing the waterline, which was installed in 1939 when the courthouse was built and is at the end of its useful life. The water line will be replaced at a later date.

“We’re currently doing an evaluation of all of our county buildings for maintenance issues and replacing the water line will be on the priority list,” Ark said.

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

See *Laminate flooring riskier to health* on page 6

Laminate Wood Flooring Riskier to Health than First Believed

Everyone exposed to formaldehyde in some laminate flooring could experience adverse health effects, according to a revised report issued by several government agencies. The revised report, released Tuesday, also found lifetime cancer risk from the flooring to be higher than identified in the original version of the report.

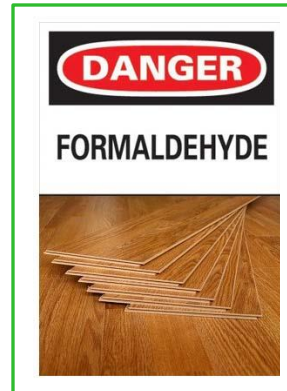
The report, issued by the National Center for Environmental Health at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, says the issues are specific to laminate wood flooring produced in China and sold by Lumber Liquidators, based in Toano, Virginia. The company, which claims to be “the largest specialty retailer of hardwood flooring in North America,” said it stopped selling the products last year.

Calculation error

“The revised report concludes that irritation and breathing problems could occur in everyone exposed to formaldehyde in the tested laminate flooring, not just in sensitive groups. The report also increased the estimated lifetime cancer risk from breathing the highest levels of formaldehyde from the affected flooring all day, every day for two years. The lifetime cancer risk increased from the previous estimate of two to nine extra cases for every 100,000 people to between six and 30 extra cases per 100,000 people,” the CDC and ATSDR said Tuesday.

“The American Cancer Society estimates that up to 50,000 of every 100,000 people may develop cancer from all causes over their lifetimes,” the CDC said.

The original report found the risk was three times lower than the risk identified in the new report. First released on February 10, the report was pulled from the agency website on February 19, “after it was discovered that an incorrect value for ceiling height was used in the report’s indoor air model, resulting in a miscalculation of airborne formaldehyde concentration estimates,” according to a statement announcing the revision.



Revised report says everyone is at risk (not just sensitive groups) and there is an increased cancer risk.

Laminate Wood Flooring Riskier to Health than First Believed (continued)

Last year CBS News aired a story by CNN’s Anderson Cooper on “60 Minutes” that found formaldehyde levels in certain laminate products exceeded standards set by the California Air Resources Board.

For the story, “60 Minutes” did its own testing on laminate flooring available at Lumber Liquidator stores in five states. Thirty-one boxes were tested from Florida, Illinois, New York, Texas and Virginia.

This prompted the Consumer Product Safety Commission to run its own tests of these products manufactured in China between 2012 and 2014. Then it asked the CDC and the disease registry to review the test results and reassess the health effects.

Formaldehyde from the tested products resulted in irritation of the eyes, nose and throat. Breathing problems were reported in individuals with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder.

In March 2015, Lumber Liquidators said it would continue to sell the products, but in a press release issued Tuesday the company said it stopped selling the products in question in May 2015.

The new report has been independently reviewed by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, experts from the Consumer Product Safety Commission and outside experts.

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

California Methane Gas Leak Continues to Affect Residents

GIHN note: There have been several news articles about the methane gas leak in the Aliso Canyon and Porter Ranch areas in Los Angeles County, California. The official response has been typical (saying the tests show no problems and it's safe to return), but the families continue to have health effects. Here is an excerpt from one of the articles:

The Aliso Canyon nightmare isn't over for Sandy Crawford's family and hundreds of other refugees from the methane leak in Los Angeles County.

Although the 112-day leak from an underground gas reservoir was permanently sealed more than a month ago, relocated residents returning to their homes report health symptoms similar to those that drove them out weeks earlier. Crawford's two boys, ages 3 and 11, both got sick when the family moved home, and so did the family dogs, Betty and Blade. The Crawfords moved back to their hotel within days.

"The limbo is what's killing us," Crawford said. "Not knowing the long-term effect and not knowing if we are just going to take (our children) home and expose them to more stuff, and what it is that we are even exposing them to, it's such an uneasy feeling."

Since the leak was sealed February 18, the Los Angeles County Health Department has received health complaints from nearly 300 individuals who either returned home or attempted to do so. The symptoms are similar to the 700 reports of headaches, dizziness, rashes, eye, nose and respiratory irritation, and abdominal pain from Oct. 28 to Feb. 18, when the leak was active. The causes haven't been identified.

This has set up a clash between residents and Southern California Gas Co., the owner of the Aliso Canyon natural gas storage facility. The unit was the source of the largest natural gas leak in U.S. history. Under orders from state authorities, SoCal Gas has been paying to temporarily shelter more than 6,000 households from Granada Hills, Porter Ranch and neighboring communities.



California Methane Gas Leak Continues to Affect Residents (continued)

The argument over environmental safety in LA echoes famous past disputes over the chemically tainted Love Canal neighborhood of Niagara Falls, N.Y., and water pollution in Hinkley, Calif., the subject of the film, "Erin Brockovich."

Sandy Crawford and her family first returned to their home, a single-story ranch house on a quiet cul-de-sac in Granada Hills, on February 19. They thought their troubles were over after more than a month in two adjoining hotel rooms. They had tired of eating cold cereal and microwaved eggs for breakfast. They wanted to resume hiking with their kids and dogs in the hills above their home and to quit driving an extra 20 miles to their hotel at the end of each day.

Before moving back home, Sandy and husband Alan, 46, an audio engineer, hired professional cleaners to scrub the house—twice. They opened doors and windows to air out the house and ran air filters continuously for two days.

The next day, their 3-year-old son Diesel woke up and said he couldn't breathe. Before leaving their home in January, the whole family experienced respiratory issues from bronchitis to asthma attacks that required visits to urgent care. Diesel and the others were free of symptoms while in the hotel.

In the following days, Sandy started having abdominal pain. Chancellor, the 11-year-old, began coughing up brown phlegm. His nose, throat and eyes hurt.

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

See *Blame HUD for Lead Epidemic* on page 8

Blame HUD for America's Lead Epidemic

Since news first emerged last year about dangerously high levels of lead in the drinking water in Flint, Michigan, it has become shockingly clear that that city is far from alone. Reports of lead poisoning are on the rise across the country, from New York to Ohio and Iowa, particularly among low-income and minority children.

Not all of the cases involve tainted water supplies. In many cases, the blame lies somewhere else entirely: federal housing policies, in place since the 1990s, that have placed 1.6 million households with children at risk for lead poisoning.

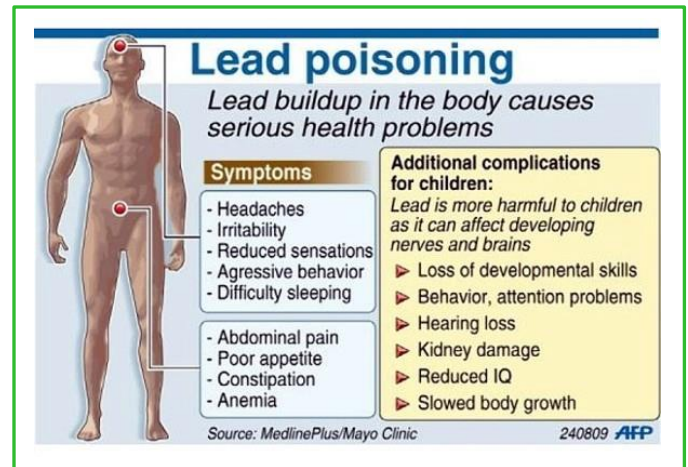
The problem is a dangerous mismatch between the prevailing science on lead poisoning and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's standards. These outdated regulations set the blood lead level for lead poisoning three to four times higher than that set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

While the CDC recommends intervention for lead poisoning at 5 micrograms per deciliter, HUD regulations do not call for action until after a child's blood lead level is 20 micrograms per deciliter, or 15 to 19 micrograms per deciliter over three months — levels that cause severe and permanent brain damage.

These regulations are the most egregious contributors to the epidemic of lead poisoning in public and low-income housing. I have spent six years working with Loyola University Chicago law students, the Erie Family Health Center and civil legal aid organizations on cases involving low-income families living in unhealthy housing. We have seen firsthand how chipping, cracking lead paint creates toxic living conditions.

Many landlords make the problem worse by ignoring federal and local laws and making repairs and renovations that disperse poisonous dust in the air — or simply evicting the “problem” tenants who complain.

A result is that hundreds of low-income Chicago children in federally subsidized housing have been poisoned in the past few years.



Blame HUD for America's Lead Epidemic (continued)

Until recently, the Chicago Housing Authority routinely denied requests from low-income families to move out of lead-hazardous homes. In doing so, it did not break any rules; it merely followed federal guidelines.

Take the case of 4-year-old Mahoghany Walker. When her blood lead levels started to rise, her family applied for a transfer. But the housing authority rejected the application, saying she had yet to reach the HUD threshold.

Like most people at risk of lead poisoning, the Walker family did not have the resources to hire a lawyer. But Mahoghany's mother, Lanice Walker, contacted our team, and together we compelled the housing authority to grant her request for a safe place to live.

To its credit, Chicago has since committed to align its own guidelines to the CDC's. Yet, many public housing authorities across the country have yet to follow suit.

The effects of lead poisoning on Ms. Walker's children, and countless others, are irreversible. To stand by as children's ability to flourish is destroyed is unpardonable.

...continued on next page

Blame HUD for America's Lead Epidemic (continued from page 8)

For that reason, a coalition of civil legal aid groups, medical providers and public health experts have filed a petition with HUD urging critical amendments to its lead-poisoning prevention regulations. Our proposed changes would align federal regulations with the C.D.C.'s standards and the prevailing science, to ensure that a lead hazard is identified before a child moves into a federally subsidized housing unit. New legislation, co-sponsored by Senator Richard J. Durbin, Democrat of Illinois, and Senator Robert Menendez, Democrat of New Jersey, would require these recommendations for all federally subsidized housing, including through the federal voucher program.

If we do not commit to solving this problem, we will continue to accrue the staggering costs associated with lead poisoning: up to \$53 billion in medical care, \$233 billion in lost lifetime earnings, \$35 billion in lost tax revenue and \$146 million in special education expenses, as well as \$1.7 billion in direct costs of increased crime associated with higher levels of lead in a community.

Of course, the problem goes beyond federally supported housing. Countless families in the private rental market are exposed to lead hazards and are clustered in communities at high risk for lead poisoning.

This problem is complex, and all of us have a role to play if we're going to find a meaningful solution. When local public health departments fail to enforce existing regulations, or those regulations are not strong enough, we must ensure that families with limited resources have access to civil legal aid and law school clinics so they are not trapped in life-threatening conditions.

The tragedy in Flint and communities across the nation is a stark reminder that lead poisoning remains an unrelenting threat to our children's health and futures. The question is whether we as a country are up to the challenge of ending the scourge once and for all.

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



Unprecedented Louisiana Flooding Affecting Homes and Public Buildings

The damage and scope of last week's flooding across Louisiana has been both record breaking and in many ways unprecedented, Governor John Bel Edwards reiterated in a news conference on Thursday where he was joined by the top federal disaster recovery administrator in the country.

But to make matters worse, many of the people impacted by the recent rising waters didn't have insurance because floods had never before touched their properties.

"This is a record-breaking flood event with floodwater all over the state of Louisiana, reaching places it's never been before," Edwards said.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Craig Fugate, in town from Washington, D.C., said authorities are working to assist people in need as quickly as possible. To date, he said \$2.5 million has been paid out in flood insurance claims.

So far, officials have identified about 12,000 homes with reports of water damage across the state. Another 1,200 private residences, which make up second homes or businesses, and 13 public facilities, including Grambling State University and Southeastern Louisiana University, had damage from flooding.

"We know some people's homes are still underwater," Fugate said. "Other areas are still at risk."

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

See *Logan County Residents—mold* on page 10

Logan County Residents Say Mold Found in Homes (Ohio)

Residents at a Logan County apartment complex say their homes are making them sick. Neighbors at Point Village Apartments in Russells Point said they've found black mold in their homes.

"Somebody's always got an issue here with their health," resident Cindy Mattox said.

Mold has been a problem at the complex for the three years she's lived there, she said.

"I have a cough that I can't get rid of," she said.

Other neighbors, she said, experience nosebleeds, coughing up blood and chronic headaches.

The property manager at Point Village Apartments declined to comment for this story. The health district worked with the property manager to fix the problem a few months ago, said Craig Kauffman, environmental health director at the Logan County Health District.

"They removed the tile and realized they had to tear out the whole sub floor," Kauffman said. "That's what they were doing."

Kauffman didn't say whether mold was found at the property but did confirm there was water damage.

"You just have to assume that there's mold there or the potential for mold," he said. "Because mold is going to grow whenever it has a chance."

Cindy Mattox disputes that the floor was replaced by the property manager.

"They didn't replace the floor; they covered the floor up," she said. "It's still a health hazard."

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

Next Newsletter: May 1, 2016



Toxic Mold Forces California Fire Station Closure

A fire station in California was forced to close after heavy rains caused toxic mold to grow in the walls.

CBS Sacramento reported firefighters with the Latrobe Fire Department started smelling an intense odor in the station after three weeks of heavy rain.

"They did identify mold in three out of the four walls so we had to evacuate the station," Fire Chief Dave Roberts said.

A fix for the mold could cost the department \$100,000. Chief Roberts said the department is currently deciding whether to fix the station or build a new one.

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

Quick Links:

Website: <http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com>

Health Effects:
<http://www.globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/health-effects>

Position Statement:
<http://www.globalindoorhealthnetwork.com/GIHN-position-statement>
