

## GLOBAL INDOOR HEALTH NETWORK

"WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS"

<http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com>

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### Welcome New Members

**Benedikt Sigurjonsson** lives in Husavik, Iceland. He has had personal experiences with mold and is currently working on a Master's Degree in Health Economics at the University of Iceland. His thesis will focus on the effects of indoor air quality on our health and the economy as a whole.

**Barbara Rutgers** lives in Hemet, California. She has personal experiences with mold and has been working as an activist to make changes in her community. She has had interactions with HUD, and her primary focus is on low-income people who have a higher risk of exposure to toxic mold because of their poor housing conditions.

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**Welcome Benedikt and Barbara**

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### Ireland: Children Sick Due to Mould

Two east Belfast mothers have separately blamed a local housing association for their children's ill-health this week.

Jennifer Giles' house has mould in every room but two, and mould has even been growing on her furniture.

She said: "My sons both suffer from respiratory problems. Daniel is on two inhalers every morning and is always coughing."

"They're saying it's condensation but condensation needs a heat source, and there is no mould in the bathroom where you would expect it if it was condensation."

"I've had to take my 14-week-old son to hospital six times so far because of the mould and the respiratory problems it caused.

"My wee boy Brooklyn has had to use an oxygen machine in hospital too."

She said: "They don't seem to care and don't want to do anything about the problem."

UUP candidate Michael Copeland said: "The conditions in these houses are nothing short of scandalous."

### Ireland--Children Sick Due to Mould



See *Tips on Improving Indoor Air Quality* on page 2

## Tips on Improving Indoor Air Quality — How to Ban Mold, Mites and Gases from Your Home

We're heading deeper into the ah-ah-choos of April. Although pollen and mold spore counts are on the rise outside, likelier allergy-triggering culprits and health risks lurk inside your home.

People spend 90 percent of their time indoors, and your home can be two to five times as polluted as the air outside, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Poor indoor air quality can cause asthma or sinus issues. Children, who because of their size breathe twice as much air as adults, are at greater risk.

Pollutants can be found in every nook and cranny of the home. Mold grows in bathrooms as a result of too much moisture, and dust mites set up camp in pillows and mattresses.

Your furniture might be emitting formaldehyde fumes, and, if not stored properly, paint cans are probably leaking volatile organic compounds, which can cause nose and lung irritation, rashes and headaches.

So what can you do to minimize your exposure?

"The first and most important thing you can do is change your furnace filter regularly," says Carol Pollard, a healthy homes specialist at the Kansas City Health Department.

Additional tips:

**Control mold.** Mold and moisture increase allergen substances and can deteriorate the structure of your home.

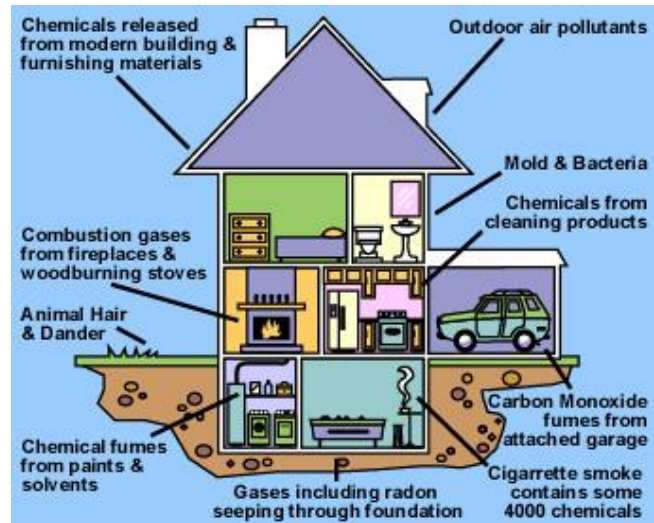
**Check ventilation.** Lots of moisture is in the bathroom and kitchen, so exhaust fans are needed.

**Repair water leaks.** Immediately address plumbing problems and leaks that allow rainwater into the home.

**Replace water-damaged materials.** When surfaces have been wet for more than 48 hours, take action.

**Clean mold.** Use a soapy cleaner — no bleach or ammonia. Wear a mask and eye gear if you're sensitive.

**Insulate cold-water pipes.** Uninsulated pipes cause condensation and excess moisture.



*Indoor Air Pollutants*

## Tips on Improving Indoor Air Quality (continued)

**Routinely check and clean gutters.** This diverts runoff away from the foundation.

**Buy a good vacuum.** Air-quality experts dislike carpeting in general, but if you have it, use a vacuum with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter.

**Limit VOCs.** Volatile organic compounds, commonly called VOCs, are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids. VOCs include a variety of chemicals, some of which may have short- and long-term adverse health effects, according to the EPA.

**Avoid using air fresheners.** "No smell is good," Pollard says. "The worst are the oil plug-ins or candle-burning oil." Air-quality experts also discourage perfumes and colognes in homes with allergy or asthma sufferers.

**Rethink cleaning products.** Castile (vegetable oil), soap, vinegar and baking soda — as well as steam cleaning — will take care of most upkeep at home.

**Choose safer paints.** Lots of low-VOC paints are available.

**Replace carpeting.** Adhesives from carpet emit VOCs. Experts recommend installing as much hard flooring as you can.

**Look for formaldehyde-free furniture.** Formaldehyde is used in mattresses as a fire retardant and an adhesive.

To read the entire article:

[How to Ban Mold, Mites and Gases From Your Home](#)

See *Protestors Target...Flooding and Mould* on page 3

## Protestors Target First Nation Flooding and Mould Problems in Manitoba, Canada

Residents of a Manitoba First Nation marched through part of downtown Winnipeg to protest flooding that plagues their community.

More than 60 band members from Lake St. Martin First Nation then marched into the offices of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada on Hargrave Street.

They say artificial flooding from a dam at nearby Fairford has plagued the reserve for years and the wet conditions have produced mould problems in many of the homes on the reserve, 225 km northwest of Winnipeg.

"We have a high percentage of our children that have breathing problems and asthma is a big thing, and that's a cause of that mould. And they breathe that every day," said band councilor Mervin Sinclair.

Donna Helm, a health worker at the First Nation, concurred.

"It does affect the community's health. I've seen a lot of kids with asthma, a lot of people with lung issues and it's affecting their daily living," she said.

[Protestors Target First Nation Flooding and Mould Problems in Manitoba](#)

## GIHN is now Registered with GuideStar



GIHN is now registered with GuideStar---a national database of nonprofits that helps to connect investors and donors with charitable organizations.



<http://www2.guidestar.org>



Protestors Target First Nation Flooding and Mould—

*Band members say artificial flooding on the Lake St. Martin First Nation is so bad that mould has affected nearly every home.*

## Earth Day: Focus on Heavy Metals in the Environment and Mold Toxicity

As the world celebrates Earth Day, environmental problems will be widely discussed. What many people are just beginning to realize is that some of these issues, like the increasing amounts of such heavy metals as mercury and lead in our environment, can have a direct and negative impact on human health.

"We are poisoning our air, food, and water with toxins that are impacting our health," says Dr. Gary Kaplan, founder of The Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine. "Increasingly we see patients who are suffering serious health issues as a consequence of toxins we have released into our environment. It is essential to educate yourself about these dangers, so you can more readily identify and avoid risks and address problems when they do occur."

**As Dr. Kaplan says, "Of course, along with addressing symptoms on an individual basis, we all have a responsibility to work on a community and national level to eliminate these poisons from our environment."**

Click on the link below to read Dr. Kaplan's comments about mercury, lead and mold.

[Focus on Heavy Metals and Mold Toxicity](#)

See *Member Profile: Gail Shephard* on page 4

## Member Profile: Gail Shephard

My name is Gail Shephard. My family and I are Victims of Environmental Illness. I use the word Victims because a crime has been committed and not only is it our illnesses but thousands of illnesses that could have been prevented. The crime is the denial of illness and existence of toxins and liability!

I was born in December of 1954. I grew up in Norwalk, California, which is located just outside of Los Angeles. Norwalk is known as a bedroom community. It was formed as one of many heavily populated, small communities clustered around industrial companies building weapons for the Cold War. My parents built airplanes for the Air Force at one of the largest companies in the country, North American Aviation.

North American Aviation was located less than one mile from my home in the City of Downey. It was also known as Air Force Plant #16 and was, at times, a Top Secret DOD Facility with many classified assignments. It was the home of the first Nuclear Reactor in California and was headquarters for Atomic International.

From the 1960s to the early 2000s, it was known as the NASA Boeing Industrial Facility which built the Apollo Command Modules and Space Shuttles. This facility was in operation for more than 70 years. That 70-year period involves the secrecy of contamination of the soil and groundwater and also the deliberate actions of poisoning the public for profit.

To learn more about why those responsible have kept Environmental Illnesses as a human tragedy, please read the following reports which are posted below and can also be found on the GIHN website under my name (Shephard) on the "Personal Stories" page.

Please feel free to contact me at [gshephard.is@gmail.com](mailto:gshephard.is@gmail.com).

[Downey Studios Flu: How an L.A. Suburb Became One of the Most Toxic Towns \(California\)](#)

[Downey Studios and Downey Kaiser \(California\)--Ralph Nader press conference](#)

[Toxic Mold Assessment, Mitigation and Prevention at DOD Facilities](#)

[The Science of "Air Pharmacology"](#)

[The Trio—NASA, Kaiser and DuPont](#)

[Downey Kaiser Papers \(website\)](#)



*Picture of mold at the office  
where Gail worked*

*<—Gail Shephard—before the illness*

## Mould Found Inside Campus Police Building at University of Windsor (Ontario, Canada)

The Ministry of Labour (MoL) issued a stop-work order to the University of Windsor in Ontario following an inspection which found mould inside a two-story building housing about 20 campus police officers.

The ministry conducted an inspection on April 8 after receiving a complaint about hazardous working conditions. "There is water infiltrating the roof walls, windows and basement causing a hazard to workers," says MoL spokesperson Matt Blajer.

The inspection report indicated that asbestos and mould was found in the building and the workplace was inadequately ventilated.

"Workers that have already had their health compromised for several years cannot continue to be exposed to these conditions without suffering additional cumulative issues," the report notes. Police officers have since been relocated to another building on the campus.

"Of the 20, 12 of them have respiratory problems, some of them quite severe," Mike Dunning, financial secretary with the Canadian Auto Workers union Local 195 in Windsor, says of the workers. Four who have been hired in the last few years now suffer from respiratory problems, which they never had prior to working in the building. "There's mould on every floor," he says.

[Mould Found Inside Campus Police Building](#)

See *Asbestos, Mold, Radon...in Courthouse* on page 5



## Asbestos, Mold, Radon Stop Knox County (Illinois) Courthouse Work

Plans to renovate the Knox County Courthouse have been derailed by reports showing dangerous levels of mold, asbestos and radon in the building, prompting County Board members to suggest spending money to upgrade it would be futile.

The Knox County Board's building committee voted to halt the \$3 million project to renovate the building at a meeting Tuesday, bringing the debate on whether a new courthouse should be built back to the table.

County Board member Wayne Saline, R-District 4, said the safety of employees needed to put ahead of other concerns.

"When the lawsuits start coming I'm going to be clean," said Saline, who sits on the building committee. "Anyone who votes yes is going to be risking patrons' and employees' lives."

Saline said 19 percent of courthouse workers have some form of cancer, although he did not detail where got the figure, and said it could not be directly linked to problems with the building.

"It's time to stop worrying about this old building and worry about the people that work in it," he added.

[Asbestos, Mold, Radon Stop Knox County Courthouse Work](#)



*St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Schenectady, NY*



*Courthouse in Knox County, Illinois*

## Church Opts to Build Way Out of Mold

A 64-year-old church is getting a \$2.2 million face-lift aimed at fixing a long-standing drainage problem that led to persistent mold in the parish hall.

Despite efforts to get rid of the fungus, the Rev. James McDonald, rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, said the problem only got worse over the years.

"We lost members because of health problems due to the mold," McDonald said.

Located on The Plaza, the church in the past eight years tried a variety of solutions to alleviate the water woes, including digging a drain around the basement perimeter and seal-coating the walls.

The mold got so bad, McDonald said, that it "made sense to start over" and raze the building.

To read the entire article:

[Church Opts to Build Way Out of Mold](#)

## Fifthshire Homes (Canada)—Steel Frames Improve Indoor Air Quality

Founded in 1976 by Joe Vella and John DiCarlo, Fifthshire Homes has become one of Canada's leading custom home builders. Fifthshire builds custom homes that comply with R-2000 standards, a voluntary green building standard developed by Natural Resources Canada (NRCan).

What sets Fifthshire Homes apart from its competition is a commitment to building healthy homes. The steel frames of the custom homes improve indoor air quality, a benefit to those who suffer from allergies and asthma. The company also uses non-VOC (volatile organic compound) paint. "We specialize in indoor air quality, comfort, and comfort systems, such as radiant in-floor heating," says Joe Vella, President of Fifthshire Homes.

"For the last 20 years, I've heavily incorporated green technologies in the homes," says Vella. In addition to healthy homes, Fifthshire Homes focuses on incorporating renewable energy into its projects, including geothermal, solar and in-floor hydronic radiant heating. It also utilizes triple glaze windows and water-based foam insulation to further conserve energy and improve the health of the home for the clients.

In 1994, Fifthshire began to build all light gauge steel frame homes. Instead of building a wood frame made from standard dimensional lumber, which is susceptible to rot, termites and myriad of other problems, Fifthshire's frames are built from light gauge steel. The steel that Fifthshire Homes uses an average of 83 percent recycled steel, making it a greener alternative to using new lumber.

The company began to focus on steel frames when Vella noticed a problem with the quality of lumber it was using. "Wood is inherent to shrinkage and movement and humidity and temperature changes," he says. "Steel framing doesn't lend itself to mold because it's not an organic material like wood is. With steel, we haven't had any problems since we've been using it."



*Fifthshire Homes—built with Steel Frames*

## Fifthshire Homes (Canada)—continued

The biggest problem with wood is mold. Experts have found a correlation between asthma in children and mold in the home. While wood itself doesn't cause mold, leaky homes with improper ventilation can cause mold to grow and create health problems for inhabitants.

The steel framing method has won the company several awards from the Canadian Government for technical excellence.

To read the entire article:

[Fifthshire Homes Improves Homeowner Comfort with Steel Framed, Registered R-2000 Compliant Custom Homes](#)

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## Quick Links

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

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

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

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**Next Newsletter: Friday, May 6, 2011**

**Working Together for Healthy Indoor Environments**