

# GLOBAL INDOOR HEALTH NETWORK

"WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS"

<http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com>

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## New Publication from OSHA

OSHA has just released a new publication titled "Indoor Air Quality in Commercial and Industrial Buildings."

**Indoor air quality is a major concern to businesses, schools, building managers, tenants, and workers because it can impact the health, comfort, well-being, and productivity of the building occupants. OSHA recognizes that poor IAQ can be hazardous to workers' health and that it is in the best interest of everyone that building owners, managers, and employers take a proactive approach to address IAQ concerns.**

[OSHA—Indoor Air Quality in Commercial and Industrial Buildings](#)

## Veterans Affairs Trying to Eradicate Mold from Administrative Building in Sioux Falls

Veterans Affairs officials are making plans to eradicate mold from the agency's administrative building in Sioux Falls, where employees have complained about poor indoor air quality for years.

The VA in June 2009 hired a contractor to clean the air handling and duct systems. An air quality study this past March still found moderate to heavy levels of brown and black molds in some areas, the Argus Leader reported.

Exposure to mold can cause upper respiratory problems in some people, especially those with breathing problems such as asthma, said Dr. Dan Heinemann, the chief medical officer for Sanford Health.

"We do know that being exposed to mold in general is not good," he said.

Officials are preparing to bid a mold eradication project, which could involve the removal of wall Sheetrock, VA spokeswoman Shirley Redmond said. Cleaner air from outside also is being pumped into the 25,000-square-foot building, which was built in 1984 and houses about 100 people. At least two staff members have been given masks with respirators.

Redmond said the cost of the project she labeled "high priority" is not yet known.

The infestation is confined to the administrative building. There have been "a few cases" of mold in the VA medical center but those cases were handled immediately, Redmond said.

[Veterans Affairs Trying to Eradicate Mold from Administrative Building in Sioux Falls](#)

See *Cayman Islands Sick Building* on page 2

## Cayman Islands—Government Being Sued Over Sick Building

A former employee of the Cayman Islands Civil Service is suing the government for health complications he claims he developed as a result of working in the Glass House, the government's administration building since the 1970s until the recent opening of the new building next to it.

The writ claims the plaintiff, Charles McCoy, was employed by the Portfolio of Finance in 1997 and was stationed to work on the second floor of the Glass House until he was transferred to Radio Cayman to work for six months.

According to the document, Mr. McCoy returned to work at the Government Administration Building and resumed his post on the second floor until some time in 2001, when he went to work in the private sector for six months.

On 15 April, 2002, he was re-engaged by the Portfolio of Finance and was stationed to work on the first floor of the Glass House and was still required to visit the second floor."

At the request of a physician, he was transferred to another building shortly after 18 February, 2010.

"The plaintiff has during the course of his employment with the Cayman Islands Government consistently complained of respiratory problems while at work and has suffered various bouts of respiratory illnesses, which required treatment by doctors in the Cayman Islands and in the United States of America," read the statement of claim.



*Cayman Islands—  
Glass House Government Building*

## Cayman Islands—Government Being Sued Over Sick Building (continued)

It further states that, "On or about the 5 May, 2008, following another bout of respiratory illness, the man was diagnosed with high antibody levels of spore pathogen *Aspergillus Niger* in his bloodstream and in January 2010 he was diagnosed as suffering from bronchiectasis caused by the presence of the mold spore pathogen *Aspergillus*."

The particulars of the injuries are described in the writ as a permanently damaged left lung and bronchiectasis. The statement of claim alleges "negligence on the part of the Cayman Islands Government, its officers, agents, employees and servants."

It claims that adequate precautions for the safety of the plaintiff were not taken; necessary testing to determine if the pathogen *Aspergillus Niger* was present in the building after a test had shown a high concentration of the genus *Aspergillus* throughout the building was not done; the plaintiff was exposed to risk of damage or injury, which was known or ought to have been known; a safe place to work was not provided; a safe and healthy working environment was not provided, in breach of Section 4 of the Public Service Management Law.

Another matter of contention in the writ is that the Government was contractually bound to keep all information relative to the man's employment, including details of his health, confidential at all times, which it claims they did not do.

[Government Sued Over Sick Building](#)

See *Household Chemicals Cause Illness* on page 3

## Household Chemicals Cause of Family's Chronic Illness

When inflammation, bruises and pain began appearing in her body in 1993, Rohini Peris had no idea what might have been the cause.

She saw several doctors and they too were stumped, Peris recalled.

Three years later, the Dollard des Ormeaux resident finally got a diagnosis: Tests at a U.S. laboratory revealed high levels of the chemical Lindane (a chlorinated pesticide used to exterminate spiders) and pesticides DDT and DDE in her blood.

Her husband, son and daughter exhibited similar symptoms, and what followed were 10 years of intense detoxification to eliminate these chemicals from their bodies.

They suffered from what is known as environmental/multiple chemical sensitivities, a chronic condition with multi-organ symptoms recognized in Ontario and Nova Scotia and by the World Health Organization – but not yet in Quebec.

According to the Environmental Health Association of Quebec, which seeks to promote awareness of this condition, it can develop in response to relatively low levels of exposure to multiple and unrelated chemicals.

Peris, who is the association president, says it took her 10 years of “intense detoxification” and elimination of many products from her household – from cleaning products to perfumes – to get her toxification down by 40 per cent.

A staff physician at the Environmental Health Clinic at Women's College hospital in Toronto, Molot has given workshops on how to take an environmental exposure history and assess patients with multiple chemical/environmental sensitivities.

To read the entire article:

[Household Chemicals Cause of Family's Chronic Illness](#)



*Chemical sensitivity to household products*

## California Workers Exposed to Asbestos

Power plant, oil refineries and shipyards at California is using asbestos which is known to have been a danger to health. Many of the shipbuilding and marine repairing units use asbestos insulation and many of the California workers are being extensively exposed to asbestos unknowingly which causes endanger to their health.

Most of the workers remain at risk of asbestos exposure and three construction companies at California have been filed charges for having knowingly exposed teens to asbestos. These charges filed against the construction company should become a lesson to every California worker in the future.

Kaiser Shipyards, National Steel and Shipbuilding Company, National Steel, Pacific Gas and Electric, Todds Los Angeles, and Todds San Francisco are some of the example job sites where workers are deliberately exposed to asbestos and eventual fall to asbestos related diseases.

Though it is unbelievable, the residential people who live near the asbestos using job sites are also affected by asbestos and by asbestos related diseases.

Most of the naval bases of U.S. in California are covered by asbestos and many veterans suffered a lot with asbestos.

The extensive exposure to asbestos in California makes the workers at the highest risk of developing asbestosis, lung diseases and mesothelioma, a rare cancer caused by exposure to asbestos.

[California Is at the Extreme Risk of Mesothelioma by Extensive Known Exposure to Asbestos](#)

See *Member Profile: Diane Perlman* on page 4

## Member Profile: Diane Perlman, Ph.D.

Decades of professional work prepared me for this historic moment in world politics. As a Ph.D. clinical psychologist and political psychologist, I studied the psychology of enmity, nuclear proliferation, cycles of violence, terrorism and Middle East conflict analysis. I feel like the world is going by without me in it. The most painful part is not being able to participate or contribute and missing opportunities. I joke that were it not for the mold I would have reversed terrorism by now.

While planning my book "Liberation from Retaliation™," I was overexposed to mold in my home. The roof (allegedly repaired in 2001) re-grew stachybotrys discovered in June 2003. My insurance company refused to allow removal until their chosen CIH came in August, despite my begging. After progressive deterioration, my immune system broke down. The CIH "inspected" in August and refused to mention stachybotrys in his report. Removal was followed by HEPA-vacuuming my house.

When my youngest left home in September 2003, I moved to D.C. to recover, write and start a policy institute. The "remediated" furniture contaminated my apartment. My insurance company's CIH ridiculously attributed the identical molds to the air in D.C. I bought a condominium and eventually discovered mold behind the shower. After removal, I gradually improved, started writing, losing weight and feeling human again, I taught graduates in conflict studies. My above neighbor flooded my condo, triggering a setback and never paid for the damage or cleanup. I had to stop teaching and haven't read a book in 8 years.

Frequent leaks in the halls made it impossible for me to recover. Exasperated by my condo board's dismissals of repeated requests, I withheld condo fees for a short time and then resumed, requesting mediation. They refused, sued me and threatened foreclosure. Ironically, efforts to warn, and protect my neighbors were ignored, thwarted and punished. I recently moved to a sublet--reacting to chemicals now with different symptoms.

Most of my time is consumed with efforts to escape the relentless vortex of mold and lawsuits. I am disorganized, dysfunctional, make frequent mistakes and discovered I have a disability. I have no idea how to earn money. I don't recognize myself. My quality of life has diminished. I feel I am letting down friends, colleagues, family, and my children. It affects every aspect of my life.

Much gratitude to GIHN for elevating our scientific credibility and creating a valuable community.



## Flood Victims Search Homes Despite Mold Dangers

Despite warnings of dangerous conditions, flood victims continue to search their destroyed homes looking for any belongings they can salvage. Lavada Byrd, who lived in Countryview Mobile Home Park for 40 years, is one of those people risking the health and safety threats to get her stuff.

"What's left of it. As you can see my pictures are ruined. It's sad," Byrd said.

While the message may not be well received, emergency managers are pleading with flood victims to limit this activity or quit all together. They fear a holiday weekend may spur more homeowners to return, but warn the walls and floors in the 393 homes that have been deemed unsafe are now buckling.

"The floors in them are primarily buckled, and those that aren't buckled are spongelike which means if you put much weight on them you will most likely go through the floor," said Shelby County Emergency Management Director Bob Nations.

The greatest threat may not be safety issues, rather health concerns. Now that the water has receded, toxic mold is spreading through the homes.

[Flood Victims Search Homes Despite Mold Dangers](#)

See *Mold at Fort Gordon* on page 5



## Mold at Fort Gordon in Georgia

This was a two-part story about mold problems at Fort Gordon near Augusta, Georgia.

One military family living in housing on Fort Gordon believes mold made them sick and perhaps caused their six-month-old daughter to stop breathing.

When Kourtney Shelton and her family moved to Fort Gordon last October, they were excited and ready for a new journey in their lives, but they didn't expect what would come next.

The family says within weeks they knew something was very wrong with the home they were paying more than a thousand dollars a month to live in.

"We had been there a few weeks and all of us were still just sick, with just respiratory symptoms," Kourtney said. "We just kind of thought it was the common cold we were passing back and forth. We had a two-year-old and a three-month-old at the time, and everyone was just miserable."

She never thought it could be the home that was causing problems. But one night when cooking dinner, Kourtney says she spotted something suspicious.

"All around the vents and all around the wall there were these little black spores everywhere," she told News 12. "We had no idea at the time how big the problem was or anything."

Kourtney and her husband took off the air conditioning vents and found something. "There were certain spots where it was black, and we just knew, we knew then we had a really big problem," Kourtney said.

In February, about four months after the family moved in, six-month old Evelyn stopped breathing. "That was by far the most scary and most traumatizing moment of my life," Kourtney said. "I just felt so helpless. There's nothing like seeing your daughter like turning blue and just sitting there."



*Fort Gordon near Augusta, Georgia*

## Mold at Fort Gordon in Georgia (cont'd)

Dr. Gena Bonitatibus, from Augusta Allergy, specializes in allergic reactions and immunology and knows a lot about mold. "Mold is very, very complicated," she said. "There's allergy to molds, there are toxic reactions to molds, and there's also irritant reactions to molds."

**"Mold is definitely a problem, even if you're not allergic to it." Dr. Bonitatibus and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention both say it's possible someone could have negative reactions because of mold growing in their home. "If you go from a place that doesn't have mold to a place that has mold, you could have an immediate irritant effect or a toxin effect," Dr. Bonitatibus said.**

Like many military bases, Fort Gordon's on-post housing is contracted out to Balfour Beatty, a British construction company that builds and maintains homes like the Sheltons' for the U.S. Government.

This isn't Balfour Beatty's first complaint about mold. We've spoken to several people with various concerns. **Just last November, 300 homes were demolished at Fort Bliss, Texas after concerns of mold, asbestos and lead in the homes there.**

[Mold at Fort Gordon, Part 1](#)

[Mold at Fort Gordon, Part 2](#)

## Ireland--Dangerous Mould Found in National Maternity Hospital

A sometimes fatal airborne mould has been discovered in the walls of the neonatal unit of Holles Street Hospital, Independent.ie has learned.

The mould, called aspergillus, was found during preparation building works for a new theatre development at the Dublin city centre hospital where 10,000 babies are born every year.

Aspergillus is particularly dangerous for children who have weak immune systems and fewer infection-fighting cells either through illness or medications they are taking.

It can cause a number of infections including fever in those with asthma or cystic fibrosis and it can also cause allergic sinusitis.

In extreme cases, the mould can lead to a disease called aspergillosis or fatal hemorrhages within the lungs.

And without prompt treatment, aspergillus has the potential to spread to the brain, kidneys or heart, where it is usually fatal.

Because it is airborne, it is also very difficult to prevent the spread of the mould.

Medical sources confirmed to Independent.ie that hospitals are perfect breeding grounds for such moulds, especially when building work is being done.

"Hospital ventilation systems are homes to all kinds of viruses and bacteria," the source said.

To read the entire article:

[Ireland—Dangerous Mould Found in National Maternity Hospital](#)

**Next Newsletter: Friday, June 17, 2011**



*Holles Street Hospital in Ireland*

## Lead Paint Linked to Lower Test Scores

Children who ingested even small amounts of lead performed poorly later on school tests compared with students who were never exposed to the substance, according to a new study of Connecticut students.

Education and public health officials called the Duke University study a stark reminder that although lead poisoning cases have dropped sharply nationwide in recent years, even very low levels of exposure can irreversibly influence children's development.

"It's compelling evidence. I think it provides even greater awareness to parents, medical providers, and advocates that lead poisoning is a serious issue and prevention is key," said Francesca Provenzano, health program supervisor for the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

[Lead Paint Linked to Lower Test Scores](#)

## 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)

**Working Together for Healthy Indoor Environments**