

GLOBAL INDOOR HEALTH NETWORK

"WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS"

<http://globalindoorhealthnetwork.com>

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GIHN Member Announcements

We have one new member this week.

Tina Dunham lives in Vidor, Texas. She was exposed to mold in her home caused by damage from Hurricane Rita. She joined GIHN to help spread the word about the health effects of mold.

Please join me in welcoming Tina.

Dr. Ritchie Shoemaker presented an eight-hour training session for physicians earlier this year in Boston. The presentation is now available on DVD. Details are available at: <http://www.survivingmold.com>

Andrea Fabry's husband, Chris Fabry, received the [Christy Award](#) for his book titled "**Almost Heaven**." Chris has written more than seventy books, and this is the second year in a row he has received the Christy Award. Congratulations, Chris!

Healthy Homes: Understanding Housing-Related Hazards

There is a growing awareness of the number of illnesses that can be caused by environmental risks in the home.

Everybody's health is at risk from housing-related hazards, but infants, children, pregnant women, the elderly, and those with chronic medical conditions and disabilities are especially susceptible.

Knowledge of potential hazards in the home is important in the prevention and treatment of the medical conditions they can cause.

Home health hazards include dust, allergens, mold, and pests such as insects and rodents. They also include toxic materials such as lead, asbestos, and chemical pesticides, and poisonous gases such as carbon monoxide and radon. Since some of these hazards are odorless and colorless, they cannot be detected by the human senses alone. That's why homeowners are encouraged to install detectors in their homes.

"Some environmental poisons can be invisible," says Laura A. Saucer, program director of Nursing at South University — Montgomery. "You can't see, taste, or smell radon or carbon monoxide, but both have deadly health effects."

Toxic materials such as lead, asbestos, and pesticides can be very harmful, Saucer says. For example, lead poisoning can cause reduced IQ and attention span, hyperactivity, impaired growth, learning disabilities, and other intellectual and behavioral problems.

To read the entire article from South University:

[Healthy Housing: Understanding Housing-Related Hazards](#)

See *NCEHS Calls HUD for Support* on page 2

NCEHS Calls for HUD Support on Interagency Committee on Chemical Sensitivities

On June 29, 2011 Mary Lamielle, executive director of the National Center for Environmental Health Strategies (NCEHS), gave a presentation for the HUD Disability Task Force during which she asked HUD to support creation of an Interagency Committee on Chemical Sensitivities/Chemical Intolerances (CS/CI).

Mary asked that HUD join the U.S. Access Board in officially supporting an interagency committee to collaborate and coordinate a federal response to CS/CI.

The proposed interagency committee would examine the research, policy development, patient support, and public education necessary to meet the needs of affected populations. It would be charged with reviewing current federal policies and programs, identifying the gaps in medical and disability research and policies, and making recommendations for further action to address such issues in a cohesive and systematic fashion.

The U.S. Access Board previously gave its support for creation of an interagency committee following a presentation by Mary Lamielle on March 9, 2011.

During the HUD presentation, Mary also highlighted four critical recommendations for HUD action to address the dire housing needs of people with chemical and electrical sensitivities (C/ES):

1. A needs assessment by HUD including initiatives to create effective design and data collection for housing for persons with C/ES;
2. Fully accessible housing including 811 housing projects, Section 8 home ownership, and rehabilitation of existing stock for persons with C/ES;
3. Segregated or separate and protected housing that meets accessibility needs for persons with C/ES; and
4. HUD funded mandatory education and training on the housing needs of persons with C/ES.



Safe Housing for People with Chemical Sensitivities

NCEHS Calls for HUD Support on Interagency Committee on Chemical Sensitivities (cont'd)

NCEHS has called for these actions for two decades and previously recommended action by HUD during presentations for the HUD Disability Task Force in 2005 and 2008.

These recommendations are supported in whole or part by the National Council on Disability's report "The State of Housing in America in the 21st Century: A Disability Perspective," January 19, 2010, at:

(<http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2010/Jan192010>),

Congressional testimony of Kelly Buckland, Executive Director of the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) on "The Inclusive Home Design Act," September 29, 2010, at:

(<http://financialservices.house.gov/Media/file/hearings/11/Buckland092910.pdf>),

and the position statement of the NCIL Housing Subcommittee, at:

(<http://www.ncil.org/news/HousingPositionPapers.html>)

For more information or to help support these initiatives, contact the National Center for Environmental Health Strategies, 1100 Rural Avenue, Voorhees, New Jersey, (856)429-5358; (856)816-8820; marylamielle@ncehs.org.

Leaky Building Program to be Announced in New Zealand

A leaky-building financial assistance package has been passed by the New Zealand Parliament – but the Government is still thrashing out details with the banks and is refusing to disclose details of the deal.

Building and Construction Minister Maurice Williamson said last week the main retail banks were "fully onside" with the \$1 billion bail-out.

But a spokesman for the Bankers Association said confidential negotiations were continuing. "A range of details" was under discussion.

"We've been working hard on this ... we want to make sure everything is absolutely clear and we want to get the details right."

Under the scheme, qualifying homeowners will get a 25 per cent contribution towards the cost of repairs from the Government and may be eligible for 25 per cent from their local council. Homeowners would need a bank loan to pay for the rest.

Homeowners were expecting full details of the package to be announced as soon as legislation passed its third reading. It went through late yesterday afternoon with unanimous support.

But a spokeswoman for Mr. Williamson said details would not be unveiled until the bill got royal assent.

Mr. Williamson was asked about the Government's guarantee for bank losses last week.

"The state of everything is tidy," he said. "We haven't yet announced the final of the details, and when the legislation is done, we'll make a full announcement on that."

Building industry deregulation led to the crisis. About 89,000 buildings are known to be leaky. Homeowners can sign up to the package if a home was built or altered less than 10 years before making a claim.

[Leaky Building Act, But No Deal Details](#)



Leaky Building Syndrome. When moisture penetrates a property and builds up behind the cladding, it causes mould to grow and eventually rots the timber frame.

Asbestos Removed from Three County Schools in Tennessee

Asbestos remediation has been taken care of at three Cheatham County schools, where floor tiles were found that contained the material.

The material has been known to cause significant health issues if inhaled into the lungs.

Floor tiles containing asbestos were carefully removed from the older section of West Cheatham Elementary School as well as from the commons area at Cheatham County Central High School, according to director of schools Tim Webb.

At East Cheatham Elementary School, the tiles were removed from the school's library, which was originally the school's cafeteria. Asbestos floor tiles were also replaced in the school's front office reception area and adjoining offices.

Almost all floor tiles manufactured in the past few decades until the mid-1980s contained asbestos because it was very cost effective. It was also used because it was extremely durable, heat resistant and fire retardant, as well as providing chemical resistance, sound absorption and was a non-conductor of electricity.

[Asbestos Removed From Three County Schools](#)

See *Member Profile: Rachel Milford* on page 4

Member Profile: Rachel Milford

My name is Rachel Milford, and I'm 25 years old. Currently, I am residing in Knoxville, Tennessee, in the process of recovering from toxic mold I was exposed to this past fall.

Prior to getting sick, my life revolved around building community through food and art. I grew up in the South but left after high school and spent six years in both the Midwest and West Coast attending college, farming, facilitating community gardens and working as a youth counselor for a food justice project. A year and a half ago, I moved back to the South, just outside Durham, North Carolina. There, I found myself apprenticing a community herbalist, as well as creating and performing with a community-based puppet troupe called Paperhand Puppet Intervention, which creates large-scale shows and organizes parades. Healthy and happy, I felt fortunate to be engaged in work I was passionate about and surrounded by others also channeling their energy into creating healthier communities and individuals.

About nine months ago, my health began to rapidly deteriorate. I had moved into a beautiful old farmhouse, and within 3 months, found myself sick with an array of confusing symptoms. Although I didn't know that mold was to blame initially, I intuitively moved out of the house and fortunately, soon after, I met another woman in my community who had survived mold-related illness. It was she who helped me put the pieces together.

After throwing away almost all of my possessions and moving into a new place, I assumed my health would gradually improve. I tried herbs, acupuncture, etc. However, as the months went by, I remained ill, unaware that I had developed MCS and also moved into a second moldy home. Like many individuals with environmental illness, I began to think I was losing my mind, as friends, family, and doctors explained away my health issues as allergies, panic disorder, or just being "overly sensitive." Finally, after continuing to educate and advocate for myself through the brain fog, I started to find some answers. I was not alone. I wasn't crazy. There were others like me. In fact, there were many of them.



Rachel Milford

Member Profile: Rachel Milford (cont'd)

So, here I am in Tennessee working toward healing myself, blessed to have a family who would take me in after I was forced to quit my job. Having spent most of the past several months feeling frustrated and disempowered, grieving for all that I had lost, and trying to answer the question, "Why me?," I am now shifting my focus to try to view this illness as a gift.

We've created a toxic world for ourselves. But even more troubling is that we've become so disconnected from this world and from each other that we don't even realize we're being poisoned. So disconnected that doctors and politicians can dismiss environmental illness, leaving those afflicted feeling afraid and alone. I feel blessed to have joined the GIHN, an organization working to bridge this disconnect. I hope to use the gift of my illness along with my skills as an herbalist, community organizer, artist, farmer, and activist to do the same. Thank you all for doing the beautiful work that you do!

"I do not think that we will be able to attain health for all until we realize that we are all providers of each other's health, and value what we have to offer each other as much as what experts have to offer us...problems which are not amenable to the most expert medical approaches may be resolved in community by the very people who suffer from them and therefore understand them. In such communities, the concept of woundedness breaks down and we are all wounded healers of each other." --Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D.

See *Flooding Spurs Mold Issues* on page 5

Flooding Spurs Mold Issues

Some Council Bluffs, Iowa, residents are finding the added moisture we're seeing can be hazardous to our health. Even away from the levee, water tables are high. And they can cause plenty of trouble on their own, as Jeff and Breanna Reicks of Council Bluffs recently discovered.

Their eight-month-old, Eli, and 2-year-old, Aliyah, are happy and healthy now, but that wasn't the case two weeks ago. And the Reicks believe their beautiful old home at 20th and Avenue "A" is to blame. High water tables nearby have brought on an ugly new problem.

"We get a lot of moisture in our basement, and we've started to get mold," Jeff said.

Breanna added, "Around Father's Day, it started coming in more. And then, within like two weeks it just exploded in our basement and now it's on every wall."

For the Reicks, the issues began with respiratory troubles, Breanna and their toddler having coughs and sniffles that just wouldn't go away. After several weeks of the on-going cold symptoms, baby Eli woke up with a swollen face.

The swelling went away when they left the house for the day, Jeff said. But then, it came back a short time after returning home. The Reicks took their children to their grandmother's home for the evening, where, again, the problems went away. "And we woke up the next morning at our home," Breanna said, "and his eyes were swollen almost completely shut on both sides."

The Reicks quickly determined black mold in their basement had to be the source. Eli was having some sort of allergic reaction. So, the family left their home, for now, and moved in with their friends in Bellevue.

A mold remediation company, they said, has given them little hope of returning soon. With the on-going moisture issues, they've been told the mold would just come back.

[Flooding Spurs Mold Issues](#)



Mold problems caused by flooding

Family Suffered Serious Harm from Pesticides--Awarded \$23.5 Million

A New Albany, Indiana, family was awarded \$23.5 million for medical problems they claimed their children had suffered as a result of pesticides sprayed in their apartment.

Todd and Cynthia Ebling, and their two young children, filed a tort claim against Prestwick Square Apartments and its management company in 1996.

The lawsuit alleged that 5-month-old Alex, or A.J., and 3-year-old Christina were both hospitalized with uncontrollable seizures less than a year after moving into Prestwick Square Apartments. The children reportedly suffered respiratory disorders, developmental delays, brain damage and seizures and still have serious health problems.

(The apartment had been sprayed with pesticides named Dursban and Creal-O.)

The Indiana State Chemist's office tested the apartment and found Chlorpyrifos from Dursban, and the Eblings' clothes and toys, which were not tested until 1997 revealed the presence of Chlorpyrifos and Diazinon, which is found in Creal-O.

The family hopes the lawsuit will bring awareness to the problems that can be created by pesticides.

[New Albany Family Awarded \\$23.5 Million](#)

Widow's Fury Over Mouldy House (Scotland)

A distressed widow in Edinburgh, Scotland, has told how her family has been confined to a single room for three months due to widespread damp riddling their council house.

Samantha Riddell, 23, claims she and her two small children have even been sleeping in a cramped living room because both bedrooms at her Musselburgh home have become uninhabitable, despite repeated complaints to housing chiefs at East Lothian Council.

Ms. Riddell is still mourning the tragic death of her 32-year-old partner, Paul Currie, who died three months ago after collapsing in the bathroom of their Moir Crescent property.

She said her four-year-old daughter is still plagued by nightmares after finding the body of her dying father slumped against the bathroom door.

A postmortem failed to uncover the cause of death.

"It's really stressful," said Ms. Riddell, who has lived in the property for around six years.

"My daughter's room is decorated but you can see the spores under her wallpaper, on the skirting boards and on the edges of the carpet. My bedroom walls have been stripped bare because all the mould was on the wallpaper.

"Having two kids living and sleeping in the living room is not ideal, they want to be able to play in their own room."

Ms. Riddell said Colin Beattie, the Midlothian North and Musselburgh MSP, had taken up her case and was speaking with the local authority about relocating the family.

[Widow's Fury Over Damp-Hit House](#)

[Next Newsletter: Friday, July 29, 2011](#)



Harborview Mold Lawsuit Headed to Trial

A Baltimore City Circuit Court judge has ruled that a lawsuit over mold in one of the ritzy Harborview condos can proceed to trial.

Paul C. Clark, who bought a penthouse at the Inner Harbor complex for more than \$1.1 million in 2009, is suing Zalco Realty and the 100 Harborview Drive Council of Unit Owners for \$5 million. He contends that the defendants knew of water and mold problems before his purchase but issued him a "resale certification" that stated they were aware of no building or health code violations.

In a ruling last week, provided to *The Baltimore Sun* by Clark's attorney, Judge John Addison Howard said the case did not have to be heard by an arbitrator rather than a jury. **"In this instance, the alleged fraud ... clearly occurred before Plaintiff was subject to the relevant arbitration clause," he wrote.**

[Harborview Mold Lawsuit Headed to Trial](#)

Quick Links

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