

GLOBAL INDOOR HEALTH NETWORK

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



September 1, 2018

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HUD's New Rule for Smoke-Free Public Housing Agencies (PHAs)

HUD's new rule took effect July 31, 2018. It requires all public housing units to be smoke free. It also includes indoor common areas in PHAs such as community facilities, public housing offices, laundry rooms, daycare centers), and outdoor areas within 25 feet of public housing and administrative office buildings. To learn more about this new rule and how it is being implemented, click [here](#). To read Information for Residents, click [here](#).

Children Poisoned by Lead on U.S. Army Bases

Army Colonel J. Cale Brown put his life on the line in two tours of duty in Afghanistan, earning a pair of Bronze Stars for his service. In between those deployments, Brown received orders to report to Fort Benning, the sprawling Georgia base that proudly describes itself as the century-old home of the U.S. infantry.

He was pleased. His wife, Darlena, was pregnant with their second child, and the Browns owned a home in the area. Their 10-month-old son, John Cale Jr, was a precocious baby, babbling a dozen words and exploring solid foods.

Cale's duties as a battalion commander required him to live on base. So instead of moving into their own house, in 2011 the Browns rented a place inside Fort Benning. The 80-year-old white stucco home had hosted generations of officers.

Like most family housing on U.S. bases today, the home wasn't owned and operated by the military. It was managed by Villages of Benning, a partnership between two private companies and the U.S. Army, whose website beckons families to "enjoy the luxuries of on-post living."

The symptoms began suddenly. At 18 months, JC would awake screaming. He began refusing food, stopped responding to his name and lost most of his words.

"He was disappearing into an isolated brain," Darlena recalls.

For nearly a year, doctors probed: Was it colic? Autism? Ear infections? Then, in late 2012, came a call from JC's pediatrician: He had high levels of lead in his blood.

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See *Children poisoned by lead* on page 2

Children Poisoned by Lead on U.S. Army Bases (continued)

When Darlena told Villages of Benning of his poisoning, contractors ordered home testing.

The results: At least 113 spots in the home had lead paint, including several peeling or crumbling patches, requiring \$26,150 in lead abatement. Villages of Benning moved the Browns into another old house next door.

The heavy metal had stunted JC's brain, medical records reviewed by Reuters show. At age two, he was diagnosed with a developmental disorder caused by lead. Now eight, JC has undergone years of costly therapy. He excels at reading and swimming, but still struggles with speech, hyperactivity and social interactions.

When a reporter met JC last year, the boy looked away and repeated a phrase from a children's TV show: "Max, what did you do? Max, what did you do?" Later, JC sat outside and watched sunlight gliding through his fingers, seemingly lost in reverie.

"I'm sad that my son lost his future," Darlena said. "It was because of where we were that this happened."

This wasn't supposed to happen to families like the Browns, who move often between posts for the U.S. armed forces, trusting base landlords and military brass to provide safe shelter for children and spouses.

Cale Brown, a 46-year-old active-duty colonel, now works on detail to the White House on the National Security Council, helping to protect the country from complex threats like North Korea's nuclear program.

For years, he has told the Army of failures to defend children on U.S. bases from lead poisoning, a preventable household health hazard. Ingesting the heavy metal can severely affect mental and physical development, especially in children, causing brain damage and other potentially lifelong health impacts. But poisoning is avoidable if old homes containing lead paint are properly monitored and maintained.

"There is no acceptable number of children that the Army can allow to be so egregiously hurt," Cale wrote in a letter to the Army Office of the Inspector General last year. He hasn't received a response to the letter's concerns.



Children Poisoned by Lead on U.S. Army Bases (continued)

The Browns' story and others, told publicly for the first time here, reveal a toxic scourge inside homes on military bases. Previously undisclosed military and state health records, and testing by Reuters for lead in soldiers' homes, show problems at some of America's largest military installations.

Federal law defines lead-based paint as containing 0.5 percent or more lead by weight. Sales have been banned since 1978. But many older homes still contain lead paint, which is particularly dangerous when it peels, chips or turns to dust – easy for kids to swallow or breathe in.

Reuters tested five homes at Benning, using a methodology designed with a Columbia University geochemist. All five contained hazardous levels of deteriorating lead paint within reach of children, in one case exceeding the federal threshold by a factor of 58.

Testing turned up problems elsewhere as well. At West Point, New York, home of the United States Military Academy, paint chips falling from a family's front door contained lead at 19 times the federal threshold.

At Kentucky's Fort Knox, whose vaults hold much of America's gold reserves, Reuters found paint peeling from a covered porch where small kids play. It contained 50 percent lead by weight, or 100 times the threshold.

The Army requires abatement when certified testing identifies deteriorating lead paint in base homes. Yet it also "discourages" this type of lead-paint inspection, in part because lead abatement can be costly.

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See *Children poisoned by lead* on page 3

Children Poisoned by Lead on U.S. Army Bases (continued)

These homes put military kids at risk. Reuters obtained medical data from the Army showing that at least 31 small children tested high for lead at a Fort Benning hospital over a recent six-year period. All tested above the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's threshold for elevated lead levels – 5 micrograms per deciliter of blood. Any child who tests high warrants a public health response, the CDC says.

Army data from other clinics showed at least 77 more high blood-lead tests for children at Fort Polk in Louisiana, Fort Riley in Kansas, and Fort Hood and Fort Bliss in Texas.

From 2011 to 2016, Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas – which processes blood tests from many bases nationwide – registered more than 1,050 small children who tested above the CDC's elevated threshold, the center's records show.

The thousand-plus blood results, obtained from Army bases through Freedom of Information Act requests, provide only a glimpse of the problem. A \$10 finger-prick test can spot a child exposed to lead, yet millions of U.S. children are never screened. Just how many are tested across all military bases isn't clear. But for those who are, the results often go unreported to state public health agencies that attend to poisoned kids.

Reuters found that Fort Benning in Georgia was not reporting lead results for small children tested at the base's hospital. Nor was Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas. Georgia and Texas, like most states, require the reporting of all these lead testing results to state health authorities.

The Army declined to comment on the lead hazards Reuters detected at base homes. Asked about the broader findings of this article, a spokeswoman said the Army conducts yearly visits to ensure housing is safe and follows the recommendations of the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics when responding to children with high lead tests. Housing managers classify resident complaints about lead paint as "urgent" and seek to respond within hours, she said.



Children Poisoned by Lead on U.S. Army Bases (continued)

The two contractors that operate Villages of Benning – Clark Realty Capital and Michaels Management Services – didn't respond to requests for comment.

The military's lapses in lead safeguards leave legions of kids at risk. Private contractors house some 700,000 Americans at more than 100 military installations nationwide, including an estimated 100,000 children ages 0 through 5.

Benning alone is home to some 2,000 small children. Of its 4,001 family homes, 2,274 "have lead-based paint present in them," according to a Villages of Benning memo from November 2017. The mere presence of lead paint doesn't make a home dangerous, but when the paint deteriorates, it is a "hazard and needs immediate attention," the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says.

"These are families making sacrifices by serving," said Dr. Bruce Lanphear, a toxicity researcher at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia who reviewed Reuters' findings. "It appears that lead poisoning is sometimes the cost of their loyalty to the military."

In 1996, the military began privatizing its homes. Twenty years after privatization began, in 2016, a DOD Inspector General report found that poor maintenance and oversight left service families vulnerable to "pervasive" health and safety hazards.

To read the article, click [here](#).

Indiana Moms Demand Answers Amid Spate of Kids' Cancer Cases

An Indiana community is demanding answers after recent testing revealed toxic airborne contaminants in some homes, including three chemicals linked to cancer. Many believe the contamination has led to more pediatric cancer cases in the area.

"We used our kids as the canary in the coal mine in our town," said Kari Rhinehart. For the Johnson County mother, this cause is deeply personal. In 2014, her 13-year-old daughter, Emma, was diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer. Just three months later, she died.

"To say that I'm angry is an understatement," Rhinehart told correspondent Adriana Diaz. "I feel like I owe Emma to figure out what's going on."

Rhinehart teamed up with fellow mom Stacie Davidson. Her stepson, Zane, was diagnosed with leukemia in 2014. She and Rhinehart started an organization called If It Was Your Child. Together they've tracked dozens of pediatric cancer cases in their area.

They believe they have enough to be considered a cancer cluster.

"After Zane was diagnosed, there were nine children in 16 months diagnosed in the county," said Davidson.

At least 79 children in Johnson County have been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer in the last 10 years. More than a quarter of those were in the town of Franklin alone.

Davidson said, "We've been told constantly that there is no problem. It's just a coincidence, [or] it's bad luck."

But in 2015, they learned about a decades-old manufacturing site where the EPA says toxic chemicals leaked into the environment.

"Our key phrase right now is, not one more. Not one more child should have to go through what our kids have gone through," Davidson said.

To read the article, click [here](#).

Regular and natural essential oils emit harmful volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The study analyzed 24 commercial essential oils, including 12 with claims of being "natural" or related terms, such as organic, 100% pure, or plant-based.

Essential Oils Emit Harmful Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)

Essential oils, widely used in society, emit numerous volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Some of these VOCs are considered as potentially hazardous under federal regulations. However, essential oils are exempt from disclosure of their ingredients on their label. Thus, the public may lack information on emissions and potential hazards from essential oils.

This study examined VOCs emitted from a range of commercial essential oils, including tea tree oils, lavender oils, eucalyptus oils, and other individual oils and mixtures of oils. Using headspace gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GC/MS),. Results identified 595 VOCs emitted from the 24 essential oils, representing 188 different VOCs.

The most common VOCs emitted were alpha-pinene, limonene, acetone, linalool, alpha-phellandrene, beta-myrcene, and camphene. Among the 589 VOCs identified, 124 VOCs, representing 33 different VOCs, are classified as potentially hazardous. All natural and regular essential oils emitted one or more potentially hazardous VOCs, such as acetaldehyde, acetone, and ethanol. Toluene was also found in 50% of essential oils.

Moreover, for the prevalent VOCs classified as potentially hazardous, **no significant difference was found between regular and natural essential oils.**

This study provides insights and information about emissions of commercial essential oils that can be useful for public awareness and risk reduction.

To read the abstract, click [here](#).

See *Cell Towers Cause Cancer* on page 5

Cell Towers Cause Cancer

Researchers with the renowned Ramazzini Institute (RI) in Italy announce that a large-scale lifetime study of lab animals exposed to environmental levels of cell tower radiation developed cancer.

A \$25 million study of much higher levels of cell phone radiofrequency (RF) radiation, from the US National Toxicology Program (NTP), has also reported finding the same unusual cancer called Schwannoma of the heart in male rats treated at the highest dose.

In addition, the RI study of cell tower radiation also found increases in malignant brain (glial) tumors in female rats and precancerous conditions including Schwann cells hyperplasia in both male and female rats.

“Our findings of cancerous tumors in rats exposed to environmental levels of RF are consistent with and reinforce the results of the US NTP studies on cell phone radiation, as both reported increases in the same types of tumors of the brain and heart in Sprague-Dawley rats.

Together, these studies provide sufficient evidence to call for the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) to re-evaluate and re-classify their conclusions regarding the carcinogenic potential of RFR in humans,” said Fiorella Belpoggi PhD, study author and RI Director of Research.

The Ramazzini study exposed 2448 Sprague-Dawley rats from prenatal life until their natural death to “environmental” cell tower radiation for 19 hours per day (1.8 GHz GSM radiofrequency radiation (RFR) of 5, 25 and 50 V/m). RI exposures mimicked base station emissions like those from cell tower antennas, and exposure levels were far less than those used in the NTP studies of cell phone radiation.

“All of the exposures used in the Ramazzini study were below the US FCC limits. These are permissible exposures according the FCC.

In other words, a person can legally be exposed to this level of radiation. Yet cancers occurred in these animals at these legally permitted levels.

Researchers with the renowned Ramazzini Institute in Italy announce that a large-scale lifetime study of lab animals exposed to environmental levels of cell tower radiation developed cancer.

Cell Towers Cause Cancer (cont'd)

The Ramazzini findings are consistent with the NTP study demonstrating these effects are a reproducible finding,” explained Ronald Melnick PhD, formerly the Senior NIH toxicologist who led the design of the NTP study on cell phone radiation now a Senior Science Advisor to Environmental Health Trust (EHT). “Governments need to strengthen regulations to protect the public from these harmful non-thermal exposures.”

“This important article from one of the most acclaimed institutions of its kind in the world provides a major new addition to the technical literature indicating strong reasons for concern about electromagnetic radiation from base stations or cell towers,” stated Editor in Chief of Environmental Research Jose Domingo PhD, Professor of Toxicology, School of Medicine at Reus University, Catalonia, Spain.

“The US NTP results combined now with the Ramazzini study, reinforce human studies from our team and others providing clear evidence that RF radiation causes acoustic neuromas (vestibular schwannoma) and gliomas, and should be classified carcinogenic to humans,” stated Lennart Hardell MD, PhD, physician-epidemiologist with the Department of Oncology, University Hospital, Örebro, Sweden, who has published extensively on environmental causes of cancer including Agent Orange, pesticides and cell phone radiofrequency radiation.

“The evidence indicating wireless is carcinogenic has increased and can no longer be ignored,” stated University of Toronto Dalla Lana School of Public Health Professor Emeritus Anthony B. Miller MD, Member of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of Canada and the UK, and Senior Medical Advisor to EHT who is also a long-term advisor to the World Health Organization.

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See *Cell Towers Cause Cancer* on page 6

Cell Towers Cause Cancer (cont'd)

Continued from page 5...

"This study raises concerns that simply living close to a cell tower will pose threats to human health. Governments need to take measures to reduce exposures from cell tower emissions. Cell towers should not be near schools, hospitals or people's homes. Public health agencies need to educate the public on how to reduce exposure from all sources of wireless radiofrequency radiation—be it from cell towers or cell phones or Wi-Fi in schools," stated David O. Carpenter MD, former Dean of the School of Public Health at the University at Albany.

"This is particularly urgent because of current plans to place small 5G cell towers about every 300 meters in every street across the country. These 5G 'small cell' antennas will result in continuous exposure to everyone living nearby and everyone walking down the street. The increased exposures will increase risk of cancer and other diseases such as electrohypersensitivity."

Ramazzini Institute investigators have completed nearly 500 cancer bioassays on more than 200 compounds, and their study design is unique in that animals are allowed to live until their natural deaths in order to allow detection of late-developing tumors. Eighty percent of all human cancers are late-developing, occurring in humans after 60 years of age. This longer observation period has allowed the RI to detect such later-occurring tumors for a number of chemicals, and their published research includes studies of benzene, xylenes, mancozeb, formaldehyde and vinyl chloride.

The Ramazzini research results come in the wake of similar findings from the US National Toxicology Program (NTP) large-scale experimental studies on cell phone radiation. Both studies found statistically significant increases in the development of the same type of very rare and highly malignant tumor in the heart of male rats—schwannomas.

"This publication is a serious cause for concern," stated Annie J. Sasco MD, DrPH, SM, MPH, retired Director of Research at the INSERM (French NIH) and former Unit Chief at the International Agency for Research on Cancer/World Health Organization, France.

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Cell Towers Cause Cancer (cont'd)

Dr. Sasco also said that, "Biological significance and concordance of results between humans and animals clearly reinforces the strength of the evidence of carcinogenicity. The facts that both experimental studies found the same types of rare tumors, which also have pertinence to the human clinical picture, is striking."

Noting that "current standards were not set to protect children, pregnant women, and the growing numbers of infants and toddlers for whom devices have become playthings," Davis, who is also Visiting Professor of Medicine of Hebrew University Medical Center and Guest Editor in Chief of the journal Environmental Research, added:

"Current two-decade old FCC limits were set when the average call was six minutes and costly cell phones were used by very few. These important, new, game-changing studies show that animals develop the same types of unusual cancers that are being seen in those few human epidemiological studies that have been done. In light of these results, Environmental Health Trust joins with public health experts from the states of California, Connecticut and Maryland, as well as those in France, Israel and Belgium to call on government and the private sector to carry out major ongoing public health educational campaigns to promote safer phone and personal device technology, to require and expedite fundamental changes in hardware and software to reduce exposures to RFR/microwave radiation throughout indoor and outdoor environments, and to institute major monitoring, training and research programs to identify solutions, future problems and prevention of related hazards and risks."

To read the article, click [here](#). To read the research paper, click [here](#).

See *HUD delayed action* on page 7

Afraid of Political Repercussions, HUD Delayed Action on Crumbling Public Housing

As public housing deteriorated in Illinois' southernmost city, bureaucrats at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development delayed stepping in because they wanted to avoid "political repercussions" and negative attention, according to a scathing audit released today.

HUD's inspector general, the agency's investigative arm, said HUD officials bickered over whether a series of internal reports dating back to 2010, citing widespread mismanagement and worsening conditions in apartment complexes in Cairo, were sufficient to seize operations of the Alexander County Housing Authority, which owned the buildings. HUD officials also worried whether the agency could afford to run the local authority if it did take it over.

In February 2016, HUD took possession of the local housing authority and appointed its own staff to run it.

Another year passed before HUD announced a plan to address the unsafe conditions at the complexes.

In April 2017, HUD officials shared the plan with residents: The complexes would be closed because the housing authority didn't have the money to repair them.

At the time of the closure announcement, a HUD spokesperson told The Southern Illinoisan that HUD was "stunned ... at what we saw, not just in terms of the deplorable living conditions that we encountered but at the poor, even absent record keeping, the staggering backlog of critical repairs, all of this going to the very health and safety of the residents living there."

The inspector general's report, citing this quote, noted that the "deplorable" conditions at the housing authority "did not occur overnight" and that HUD was aware of many of the problems based on multiple assessments completed over six years.

"The findings in the Inspector General report underscore what we've already known — HUD and the Alexander County Housing Authority failed the people of Cairo. HUD must enact policies to prevent this from ever happening again." To read the article, click [here](#).

The most prevalent VOCs (e.g., ethanol, d-limonene, and formaldehyde) have links with building materials, furnishings, and fragranced consumer products such as air fresheners and cleaning supplies. Highest indoor to outdoor concentration (I/O) ratios of formaldehyde (27), toluene (9), p-xylene (12), and m-xylene (11) were in a green building.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) Inside a University Building

This study investigates volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at a large Australian university, within locations of campus services, restrooms, renovated offices, a green building, meeting areas, and classrooms. Analysis of 41 VOCs across 20 locations reveals indoor concentrations higher than outdoor concentrations for 97% of all VOC measurements (493 unique comparisons).

Hazardous air pollutants (formaldehyde, benzene, toluene, and xylenes) were up to an order of magnitude higher indoors than outdoors, and at the highest combined geometric mean concentrations in classrooms (51.6 µg/m³), renovated offices (42.8 µg/m³), and a green building (23.0 µg/m³).

Further, d-limonene, ethanol, hexaldehyde, β-pinene, and isobutane were up to two orders of magnitude higher indoors than outdoors.

The most prevalent VOCs (e.g., ethanol, d-limonene, and formaldehyde) have links with building materials, furnishings, and fragranced consumer products such as air fresheners and cleaning supplies. Highest indoor to outdoor concentration (I/O) ratios of formaldehyde (27), toluene (9), p-xylene (12), and m-xylene (11) were in a green building; highest of benzene (6) in renovated offices; and highest of o-xylene (9) in meeting areas.

Results from this study are consistent with findings from similar international studies and suggest that university indoor environments may be important sources of pollutants.

To read this abstract, click [here](#).

Dr. Michael Gray's Treatment Protocol

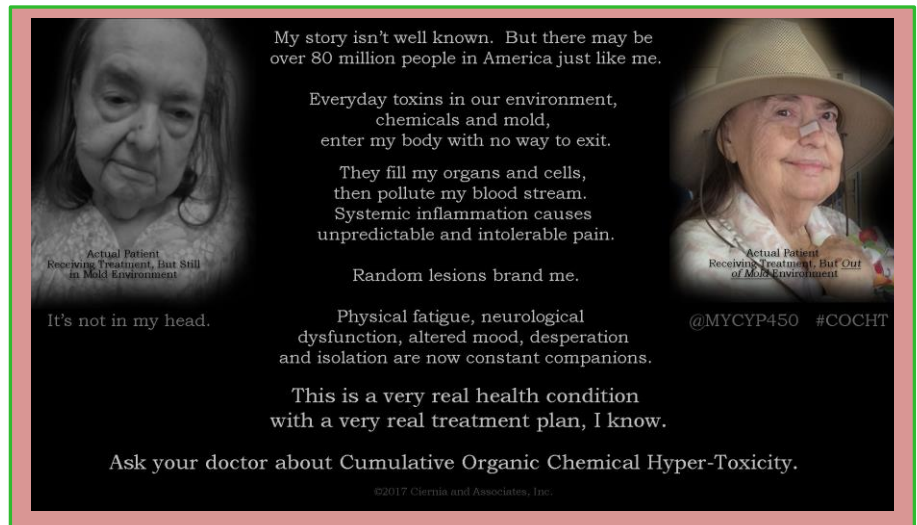
Dr. Michael Gray provided details on his treatment protocol in our new paper titled "Diagnosis and Treatment of Illness Caused by Contaminants in Water-Damaged Buildings."

As mentioned in our paper, Dr. Gray refers to this illness as Cumulative Organic Chemical Hyper-Toxicity (COCHT).

He has developed a series of flyers (i.e., public service announcements or PSAs) to help raise awareness for this illness. Three of those PSAs are included on this page of our newsletter.

You can watch this [YouTube video](#) to hear Dr. Gray discuss COCHT. He explains that some people have genetic deficiencies that allow toxin accumulation. If we are missing certain codes in our DNA, we can't neutralize, metabolize or eliminate toxins. If you can't clear those toxins, then you have multi-organ system illnesses.

To read our paper on Diagnosis and Treatment of Illness Caused by Contaminants in Water-Damaged Buildings and to learn more about Dr. Gray's treatment protocol, click [here](#).



My story isn't well known. But there may be over 80 million people in America just like me.

Everyday toxins in our environment, chemicals and mold, enter my body with no way to exit.

They fill my organs and cells, then pollute my blood stream. Systemic inflammation causes unpredictable and intolerable pain.

Random lesions brand me.

Physical fatigue, neurological dysfunction, altered mood, desperation and isolation are now constant companions.

This is a very real health condition with a very real treatment plan, I know.

Ask your doctor about Cumulative Organic Chemical Hyper-Toxicity.

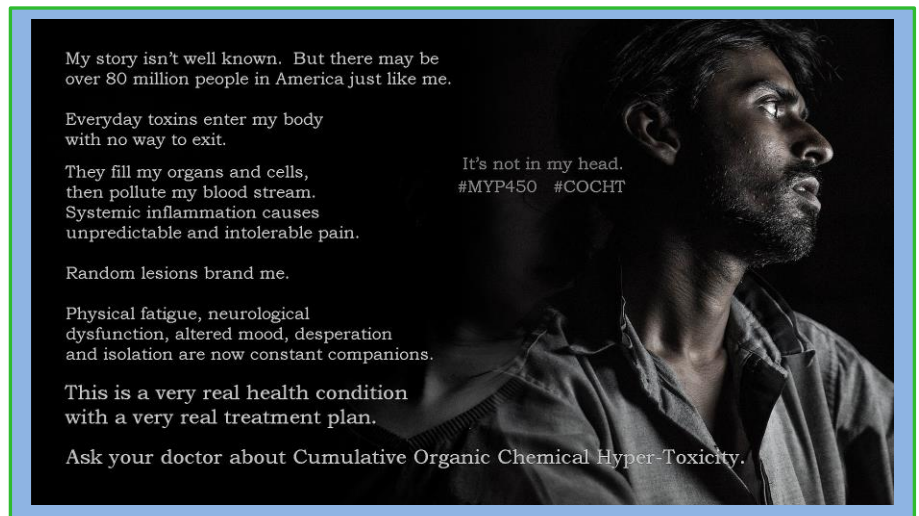
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Actual Patient Receiving Treatment, But Still in Mold Environment

Actual Patient Receiving Treatment, But Out of Mold Environment

It's not in my head.

@MYCYP450 #COCHT



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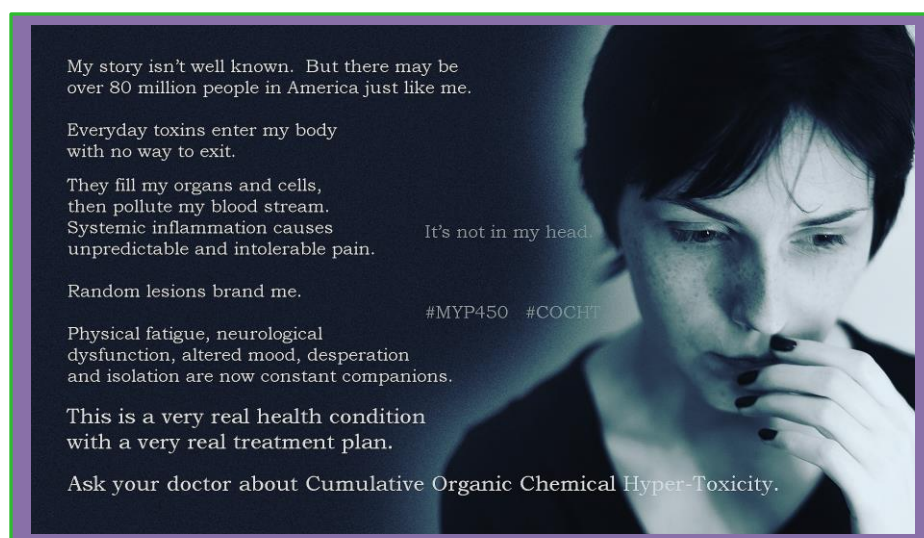
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#MYP450 #COCHT



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#MYP450 #COCHT

Mercury Discovered in Four Beaufort County Schools

Potentially hazardous mercury vapor emanating from the gym floors of four schools within the Beaufort County School District was discovered this summer, officials announced Friday.

At a Beaufort County Board of Education work session, district officials said that the rubber gym floors at Hilton Head School of the Creative Arts, Beaufort Middle School, Robert Smalls Academy and Islands Academy each tested positive for mercury vapor.

When the air conditioning is operating in the gyms, the mercury levels are far below the federally accepted standard from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry for people who may play and work in the gym.

However, when the air is turned off, the amounts of mercury vapor in the gyms rise to levels that are significantly more concerning for the health and safety of occupants, according to the agency's standards.

Exposure to high levels of mercury can permanently damage the brain, kidneys or a developing fetus. Effects of mercury on brain function can cause irritability, shyness, tremors and memory problems, according to the agency. Signs of exposure include coughing, difficulty breathing, nausea, eye irritation, severe tremors and changes in behavior or vision.

The Board of Education took up (industrial hygienist) Andy Rowland's recommendations and unanimously voted to conduct periodic mercury testing at each of the four schools and cover the gym floors with a new coating.

To keep the mercury levels as low as possible in the meantime, the district is lowering the temperature in each gym. If one of the four schools' air conditioning systems breaks down, the gym will remain closed until the air is running again, according to district spokesperson Jim Foster.

How was the mercury vapor discovered?

In June, the district began the process of replacing the gym floor at the Hilton Head School of the Creative Arts.



Mercury Discovered in Four Beaufort County Schools (cont'd)

Before demolition work was set to begin, the contractor informed district officials that the type of rubber gym floor in place at the school had raised mercury- and air-quality concerns in other states.

District officials, who had not been aware of the potential mercury, then had the floors tested. The results came back positive.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry deems that levels below 1,000 nanograms per cubic meter are acceptable for occupancy. After the air was turned off for an extended period, the levels rose to between 1,480 and 2,520 nanograms per cubic meter.

How widespread is the problem?

From the 1960s to the 1990s, schools across the country installed synthetic rubber flooring in indoor gyms, field houses, running tracks and various other athletic facilities.

This type of flooring contains a mercury catalyst that slowly releases mercury vapor — particularly from damaged areas — over time, according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

In 2015, mercury discovered in the gym floor of an Arizona school sparked concerns from parents and prompted the state's School Facilities Board to survey all 220 school districts across the state. The survey found 176 potential rubber floors of concern at 73 — roughly a third — of Arizona's school districts.

To read the article, click [here](#).

Employees Protest Poor Working Conditions in State Office Buildings

State employees protest unsanitary work conditions early Friday morning outside the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Office's Brown-Heatly building, in Austin on August 17, 2018.

Joanne Day is no stranger to problems in her workspace. In her nearly 20 years working at a state health agency, she's dealt with mold, leaking rainwater and falling drywall — all issues she blames on poor funding of the state's facilities commission and mismanagement within her agency.

But after reading a recent report by The Texas Tribune that revealed the mold incursion in the Austin State Hospital 636 building, Day still shuddered.

"I was surprised, but not surprised," said Day. "I was appalled. I was disappointed that someone else is going through this."

On Friday morning, a group of state employees gathered outside of the main campus of the Health and Human Services Commission holding signs with illustrations of rats and roaches. They were protesting what they believe are poor working conditions and failed maintenance responses in state office buildings. Earlier this month, Department of State Health Services employees were relocated from a state hospital building where a mold infestation had invaded some of their desks, chairs, carpeting and keyboard hand rests. The move was announced one day after the Tribune uncovered the conditions.

Simon Andrade, whose workplace was directly affected by the mold invasion, said he was "frustrated" that the problem wasn't addressed sooner — and more frustrated that his coworkers had to go to the media to seek help instead of getting help from senior leadership.

"I think [the mold] has been disruptive in our work having to move locations, having to work in conditions that don't give us everything we need to get our jobs done," Andrade said. "As state employees, our concerns fell on silent ears."



Employees Protest Poor Working Conditions in State Office Buildings (cont'd)

This isn't the first unsanitary issue in state buildings. Last year, the health commission said its Austin building was overrun by several hundred rats— and had to pay \$60,000 for exterminators.

But the recent issues with mold has energized workers with the Texas State Employees Union to call on the Health and Human Services Commission and the Texas Facilities Commission to not ignore requests for building maintenance, and to move employees immediately if there's a building issue. State employees are already calling on lawmakers to properly fund the Texas Facilities Commission next session in order to avoid problems with building conditions.

"If you're seeing multiple state agencies dealing with issues around facilities, it just begs the question of what's been the state's approach to establishing safer work environments for their employees," Andrade said.

But state employee Sarah Swallow said the recent case can't be the only the state building that has mold — she's heard that most state buildings have the same issues. Swallow said she's looking at the Legislature to "do whatever it needs" to sort out the problems so working conditions can improve for her and thousands of other state employees.

"The Legislature needs to do something, do whatever it takes," said Swallow, who declined to give the specific agency where she works. "Because for whatever reason, the Texas Facilities Commission is not willing or not able. It's just ridiculous the number of things that go unaddressed." To read the article, click [here](#).

Twins Hospitalized for Lead Sent Back to Unsafe Home Because of Health Department Nurse

Twins with lead poisoning so severe they were hospitalized were released and sent home to a property with chipping and peeling lead paint because of a Milwaukee Health Department nurse, city records show.

Those actions put the children at serious risk of additional lead poisoning, according to a September 2017 written warning for Margot Manassa, the city's public health nursing coordinator.

"The employee informed the hospital that the property was clear even though the inspector informed the nurse that there were lead hazards; windows and entrance door had chipping and peeling lead paint," the warning reads. "The employee failed to document any conversation with hospital staff or lead risk assessor."

Manassa spent two days at a health fair in August 2017 rather than providing follow-up care for the twins and their family, the warning says.

"The employee informed Children's Hospital of Wisconsin that she would be out and there was limited staff for follow-up case management and investigation," it reads. "The employee decided to attend a setup of a health fair and a second day at the event in place of providing nursing case management to a high-risk child."

The twins' lead levels were so high they were in the hospital to receive chelation therapy, a medical procedure used to remove metals like lead and mercury.

Despite the seriousness of their poisoning, the city failed to keep complete records and there was "no education to the parent" offered, the warning says.

"The charts for the pair of lead poisoned chelated twins are; incomplete, illegible and show that no case management was conducted," it reads.

To read the article, click [here](#).



Flight Attendants More Likely to Get Cancer than Most

A new study published in the journal *Environmental Health* measured cancer rates among US airline-cabin crews relative to the overall American population and found a greater prevalence of cancer among flight attendants. Rates among flight attendants were especially high for breast, uterine, cervical, gastrointestinal, and thyroid cancer. There are a multitude of factors, and not one single reason for this cancer gap, according to the study.

Even when flight attendants reported having stereotypically good health, diet, and exercise regimens, the likelihood that they would be stricken with certain cancers was still higher than the other survey respondents.

Among female flight attendants, the rate of breast cancer was 50% higher when compared to the general population. Melanoma rates were just over 200% higher and non-melanoma skin cancer rates were about 300% higher. Male flight attendants, meanwhile, were about 50% more likely to suffer from melanoma and 10% more likely to have non-melanoma skin cancer.

In general, though, airplane cabin crews are exposed more regularly to ultra-violet light and cosmic radiation than the average person—at higher altitudes, cosmic radiation goes through less atmospheric filtering.

Other concerns include the myriad substances cabin crews are exposed to because of engine leaks and flame retardants, both of which can contain suspected carcinogens. To read the article, click [here](#).

Mold in Several Schools in Ocean County

At least three Ocean County elementary schools had to be scrubbed down and aired out in time for the start of classes next week after mold was discovered, district officials announced.

Officials from the Brick, Stafford and Lakehurst school districts, as well as the state climatologist at Rutgers, said a hot, humid August contributed to the outbreak, aggravated in the case of Brick's Emma Havens Young Elementary School by a non-working dehumidifier.

"Our custodial staff discovered seven classrooms in one section of the building that appeared to have developed surface mold growth," read a joint message from Principal David Kysian and Brick Superintendent of Schools Gerard Dalton posted on the district's web site. "The most probable cause was the high humidity we experienced during the last weeks of August."

The state climatologist at Rutgers, David Robinson, said the assessment made sense.

Robinson said mold thrives on a combination of moisture and warm temperatures, noting that the problem was notably worse after Hurricane Harvey, which struck a year ago this month, than it was after Sandy, which landed in late October of 2012. In other words, when it comes to mold, it's not just the humidity, it's the heat.

Mold is not unique to Ocean County schools. A spokesman for the state Department of Education, Michael Yapple, said the department did not have comprehensive statewide records, but there was an anecdotal report of mold in White Township in Warren County. Yapple also said the Holly Glen School in Monroe Township, in Gloucester County, remained closed for an ongoing mold issue dating back to last year.

Six schools in Monroe were shut down last October after a mold outbreak in that Middlesex County township.

"Mold can be a very fast-occurring problem and sometimes with the buildings closed up for the summer it can be an issue." To read the article, click [here](#).

Mold can be a very fast-occurring problem and sometimes with the buildings closed up for the summer it can be an issue.

Mold in Several Schools in Ocean County (cont'd)

From another news article about mold in Ocean County Schools:

Three schools in Ocean County — Emma Havens Young Elementary in Brick, Lakehurst Elementary and McKinley Avenue Elementary in Stafford — are contaminated with mold, officials from both school districts announced this week.

"As we continued to prepare Emma Havens Young Elementary School for the return of students and staff, our custodial staff discovered seven classrooms, in one section of the building that appeared to have developed surface mold growth," Superintendent Gerard Dalton and Principal David Kasyan wrote to parents in a letter posted on the Brick Township Public Schools' website. "The most probable cause was the high humidity we experienced during the last weeks of August."

The dehumidification system near those classrooms was also malfunctioning, they wrote.

"Additionally, we have contracted with Environmental Safety Management Corporation (of Riverside, Burlington County) to provide services for testing of air and surfaces and monitoring for temperature and humidity to assure that all locations are safe prior to occupancy by students," they wrote. "District staff will continue to monitor the conditions of the impacted rooms on a regular basis as we await the results of testing."

To read the article, click [here](#).

See *Poisoned by lead in D.C. homes* on page 13

Numerous Children Have Been Poisoned by Lead in Homes Approved by D.C. Housing inspectors

Chanelle Mattocks remembers everything about that night in 2014, when lead poisoned her son.

She was giving Alonzo, then 3, a bath in a tub that her landlord had just painted to pass a housing inspection. She turned to find a washcloth, and when she swiveled back, she found the boy with bits of peeling paint in his mouth. She tried get it out, but it was too late.

The lead tests came back positive: Alonzo had more than double what the government defines as “elevated,” and he hasn’t been the same since.

Between March 2013 and March 2018, at least 41 families discovered that their homes, subsidized by a housing voucher and approved by city inspectors, contained lead contaminants, according to a tabulation requested by The Washington Post through the Freedom of Information Act.

The District Department of Energy and Environment, which performed the count and the testing, said it inspected about half of the homes because a child living at the property, or visiting it often, had tested positive for elevated levels of lead; the other homes were investigated following a tip about possible lead hazards. The agency said that the list wasn’t exhaustive and that there may be more.

The findings again highlight key weaknesses in federal guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development which the District and other cities follow. Many rental properties supported by housing vouchers in the city receive inspections under these standards. But they require only visual inspections for peeling paint and don’t mandate lead testing, unlike states such as Maryland and Rhode Island.

“You cannot detect with any certainty that a house does not contain toxic lead dust without doing a dust test, period,” said Ruth Ann Norton, president of -Baltimore’s Green & Healthy Homes Initiative and one of the nation’s foremost experts on lead-poisoning prevention.

The findings again highlight key weaknesses in federal guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development which the District and other cities follow.

Numerous Children Have Been Poisoned by Lead in Homes (cont’d)

Since 2013, the District has subsidized and inspected more than 18,900 properties, all while it tries to meet a crisis in homelessness and affordable housing. In the first seven months of 2018, the D.C. Department of Human Services placed 367 homeless families — nearly three times as many as it did in 2013, according to city statistics.

Rick White, a spokesman for the District Housing Authority, which performs many of the inspections for subsidized properties, said that most of the voucher properties in the tabulation were overseen by the agency. After hazardous lead was found in the homes, some families moved out when their landlords did not abate the contamination. Other landlords cleared the properties of lead hazards and provided documentation to city authorities, and the families stayed. It is the landlords’ responsibility, he said, to ensure that the homes are free of hazardous lead.

The fix for peeling paint, however, often includes another coat of paint. But superficial and cosmetic fixes, according to housing advocates, lawyers and tenants, do little to address more significant and underlying issues, such as plumbing problems or leaking roofs, that can cause paint to crack and peel again. And that’s when lead paint, effectively banned in 1978, becomes dangerous.

“So, who do we hold responsible?” Mattocks said. “We have to hold the city accountable, and the landlords accountable, we have to hold all of these people accountable...so that the children we call our future, we take care of these children. But how do we do that if we don’t hold them accountable?”

To read the article, click [here](#).

See *Cardinal Creek homeowners* on page 14

Cardinal Creek Homeowners Locked in Battle with Tamarack Homes

Residents of a suburban housing development in Ottawa's east end say they're worried their new homes are unsafe after discovering major construction defects soon after they moved in.

The City of Ottawa confirmed building code violations were discovered in at least nine homes in the Cardinal Creek neighbourhood after the owners moved in, meaning the new homes didn't meet the minimum standard for health and safety.

Different homeowners found issues such as cracked foundations, leaky walls, mouldy basements and garages, and evidence of deer mice, which can carry the rare but sometimes deadly hantavirus.

The homeowners have been working with the builder, Tamarack Homes, the city and regulator Tarion to make the necessary repairs, but it's a slow process.

In the meantime, they can't sell their homes, and most can't afford to live elsewhere while they await repairs.

"We have no choice. We're stuck here," said homeowner Julie Bellefeuille.

City inspectors have since confirmed more than 14 building code violations in the Bellefeuille's home, which, according to a Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) assessment requested by the couple, has dropped in value by more than \$100,000 since they moved in.

"It's been hard. It's been very frustrating, causing a lot of anxiety, sleepless nights," Bellefeuille said.

They've spent thousands of dollars on private engineers and inspectors, and countless hours researching and writing to the city, the builder and Tarion.

"The process is completely broken," Bellefeuille said. "People shouldn't suffer this way."

To read the article, click [here](#).



New-Onset Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP) After Mold Exposure in a Water-Damaged Home

The exact pathological processes and triggers for chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP) are not well understood.

We report two patients who developed CIDP after living in a badly water-damaged home which contained very high levels of airborne mold. We also present a short review of the related literature linking exposure to mold and mycotoxins with neurological problems.

The patients had nerve conduction velocities, clinical exam findings, and (in one patient) a sural nerve biopsy consistent with CIDP.

The patients also developed other new-onset chronic health problems including chronic fatigue, asthma, and neurocognitive problems such as memory and attention deficits.

Clinicians who treat patients with CIDP and other peripheral neuropathies need to consider and document environmental and occupational exposures (such as indoor water damage and heavy mold growth) as potential triggers for neurological damage.

To read the paper, click [here](#).

Mould a Growing Problem in Iceland

Mould is a growing problem in Icelandic homes and buildings – and not only old ones. Recent reports indicate that the way insulation is installed in Iceland could be the root of the problem.

Icelandic media has increasingly reported on entire homes demolished and buildings, even government offices, closed due to mould infestation. RÚV spoke to Ríkharður Kristjánsson, engineer, about the issue on morning radio today. Ríkharður says mould growth can be traced back to the Icelandic practice of insulating homes and buildings from the inside rather than the outside.

In true Icelandic fashion, Ríkharður compares house insulation to sheep. “You can see how the sheep prepares itself for winter. She grows wool, which is insulation, and she has it on the outside, not the inside. We, when we go out into the cold, we also dress ourselves in wool clothing, and we put it on the outside. But when we insulate a house, we do it on the inside.”

Ríkharður says the reason for the practice is simple: weather conditions make it difficult to insulate buildings from the outside in Iceland. He adds that there was general ignorance about the issues that could arise when insulation is installed from the inside rather than the outside.

“One thing is that it can emit humidity, that’s just the physics. Another thing is that the outer walls become cold, the inner walls and panels hot and when they cool the outer walls contract. It’s like when a man puts on a sweater that’s too small. It splits at the seams.” The same physical phenomenon occurs in houses, Ríkharður says, forming cracks in its structure. In addition to inviting moisture damage, the cracks can affect sound isolation in large buildings – the walls vibrate and sound travels more between floors.

Ríkharður says that although it is more costly to insulate buildings from the outside, the practice is gaining traction in Iceland. He mentions the recently built Höfðatorg tower in Reykjavík as one example. He adds that Iceland needs to set more stringent regulations for construction that take the local weather into account, as general European standards are not sufficient.

To read the article, click [here](#).



Courthouse Workers Walk Out Over Mould (Bahamas)

NGRY employees at the Garnet Levarity Justice Centre walked out of the courthouse building yesterday morning in protest of an unresolved mould issue.

The workers gathered outside around 9.30am calling for the issue to be resolved after an independent test revealed severe mould infestation in three areas of the building.

Trade union leader Quinton LaRoda, area vice president of the Bahamas Union of Teachers, supported the workers.

According to one employee, the situation is unbearable.

"We decided to sit out and take action because the mould is really bad inside the building. We had independent persons come and check the place and they reported that there are three areas that must be evacuated right away, and that there are other areas affected as well," she said.

Although the building has been sanitised in the past, the mould problem continues to persist because of construction flaws.

Several prominent local attorneys have also spoken out on the unacceptable condition of the courthouse and called on the powers that be to repair it, and ensure proper upkeep and maintenance of the building. They believe it reflects poorly on the judicial system in Grand Bahama.

To read the article, click [here](#).

See *Mold Concerns Cause Delays* on page 16

Mold Concerns Cause Delays, Closures at Multiple Schools in Western Pennsylvania

Several districts are dealing with mold-related issues at the start of the 2018-19 school year. Here are 3 of the schools impacted by these delays and closures:

Plum Borough School District

The district's first day of classes has been pushed back to Sept. 4 because of "air quality concerns" at Plum High School and Oblock Junior High, according to a statement released Monday. Rooms where mold was found have been closed and cleaned.

"The reason for the postponed start is to allow for air sample testing in all of our buildings and professional cleaning if it is deemed necessary," the district said. "The air testing takes a minimum of 48 hours to obtain results after the remediation has taken place."

Mount Pleasant Area School District

The first day of class for junior high and high school students has been postponed until Sept. 4.

Teachers at the junior/senior high school found water damage and what looks like mold and fungus in at least one classroom, the district said. Air quality tests also showed an elevated level for mold.

Restoration crews were brought in to power-wash and waterproof the school.

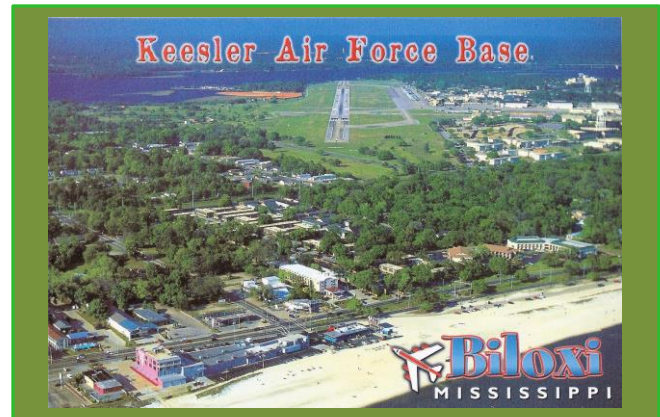
Shaler Area School District

Air quality tests at Shaler Area High School found that spore counts in the preschool and robotics rooms were higher than other rooms, the district said.

The first day of classes for high school students has been postponed to Sept. 4.

An outside company will be hired to re-clean all surfaces and dehumidify the school.

To read the article, click [here](#).



Military Families Sue Over Mold in Their Homes

Six military families claim they were recently driven from their Keesler Air Force Base homes by the spread of toxic mold, and five other families are still living in their mold-affected houses.

All eleven families are suing Hunt Southern Group and Hunt MH Property Management, the companies that own and manage the base housing there, over the outbreak of the mold in their homes and the inadequate treatment the companies allegedly provided, which included a simple attempt at removal using soap and water. Specifically, the companies have been accused of fraud, conspiring to conceal dangerous conditions, breach of contract and gross negligence.

According to the lawsuit, residents' complaints about the mold started in 2015, and in 2017 environmental testing of the homes led to the discovery of high levels of aspergillus and some stachybotrys.

The lawsuits allege that the mold grew in the houses because of poor insulation in the air conditioning system, which led to duct sweats and water damage.

To read the article, click [here](#).

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