

MEMBER UPDATE

MOULD AT MELCOR CENTRE

Sign the petition so together we can fight for a solution to a long-term problem

High levels of mould have been detected in parts of the Melcor Centre where you work. Your fellow AUPE members have been trying to work with your employers, the Government of Alberta (GOA) and Alberta Health Services (AHS), to address these issues, but it's going to take all of you raising your voices together to be heard.

In order to put pressure on the employers, you and your co-workers must take action to persuade them to take this issue seriously. Before you do that, it's important everyone understand the risks and the concerns.

DID YOU KNOW?

- That high levels of mould have been detected in the Melcor Centre?
- That problems with mould may have persisted for years?
- That there have been repeated incidents of flooding?
- That mould in the workplace can be a health hazard, especially for people with underlying health conditions?
- That air-quality tests have been done in some parts of the centre but not others?
- That we have started an **online petition** to get staff out of this mess?
- Some of your co-workers are experiencing recurring colds and coughing, aggravated allergies and migraines, possibly because of the mould.

HOW BAD IS THE MOULD PROBLEM?

Air-quality tests carried out in January showed that one type of mould was found to be at three times the expected level.

The guideline for the Aspergillus/Penicillium type of mould says that it should be present at a concentration similar to or lower than found in the air outside the building.

In January, it was measured at 720 spores per cubic metre, three times the outdoor level of 240 spores per cubic metre at the same time.

While this level is below the what's considered hazardous in Occupational Health and Safety rules, those rules don't take into account the risk from prolonged exposure, especially for people with health problems. Mould may have been at the Melcor Centre for years.

The health effects of exposure to Aspergillus/Penicillin varies by species but many

species are reported to be allergenic. Some species produce toxins that might have significant health effects in humans.

Aspergillus is one of the most infectious of moulds, but infections are not common in normal immune systems. In immuno-compromised individuals, however, the disease Aspergillosis is a very significant and potentially deadly health concern.

Some species of penicillium can produce mycotoxins, a common cause of extrinsic asthma.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

All employees

Workers at the Melcor Centre need our employers (the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services) to fix this problem. We don't think they will take action unless a majority of us voice our concerns. That is why we are asking that you join us in signing the petition at www.aupe.org/Melcor/petition.

We are insisting that the Government of Alberta (GOA) and Alberta Health Services (AHS) release a timeline for moving staff exposed to mould out of the mouldy Melcor building and then move them promptly.

GOA members

Please contact us at mould.melcor@aupe.org if you have had problems because of mould or are worried about your health.

AHS members

If you have had problems because of mould or are worried about your health, please report this to the AHS MySafetyNet.

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