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## CANTON OFFICE BUILDING CURED OF ILLS, TESTING AGENCY REPORTS SOME OCCUPANTS STILL LOOKING FOR NEW LOCATION

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By George W. Davis, Beacon Journal staff writer

The downtown Canton office building that workers for state and county agencies blamed for their medical problems has been given a clean bill of health by an independent testing agency.

Canton Health Commissioner Robert E. Pattison said yesterday that results of testing done by Clayton Environmental Consultants of Cleveland at the former Stern & Mann building on Cleveland Avenue Northwest showed only two samples of fungal growth. Both areas have been cleaned up, Pattison said. The building's owner, Tri-State Realty in Jackson Township, paid for the tests at the request of the city Health Department.

Pattison said Clayton's testing supported the city's inspections in June and early July.

Still, officials at some state agencies said they have checked into moving from the former department store building.

William Casto, director of the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired, said his office is "still functioning in the building while continuing to explore other possible sites in the downtown Canton area."

"We have been concerned about our employees in the Canton facility," Casto said. "We had asked anyone with medical statements to come forward if they felt their problems were being exacerbated by conditions in the building. Nobody did."

The three-story brick structure houses more than 400 workers with the Ohio Department of Human Services, the Ohio Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the privately operated Family Services Inc. and the Ohio Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired.

Several employees in the basement and on the first floor have complained for roughly two years about what they consider unhealthy conditions in the building. Last year, mushrooms and various other fungi, including

Stachybotrys atra mold, were found growing in water-plagued areas. Stachybotrys is a fungus considered most dangerous to children and the elderly.

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