

Thank You for using NewsLibrary

AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

CANTON BUILDING'S BILL OF HEALTH CLEAN DOWNTOWN OFFICE GETS OK FROM HEALTH COMMISSIONER. BACTERIOLOGICAL TESTS NEXT

Wednesday, June 17, 1998

Section: METRO

Page: B1\

By George W. Davis, Beacon Journal staff writer

More investigation has revealed "no obvious problems" in a downtown office building housing more than 150 state and local workers. However, bacteriological testing has been ordered.

City Health Commissioner Robert E. Pattison said yesterday that only satisfactory results were found by several inspectors from his office, building owner Ed Buttle of Tri-State Realty and an Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation worker who had assisted with testing in the former Stern & Mann department store building last year.

The building is at the northwest corner of Cleveland Avenue Northwest and Tuscarawas Street.

"Our people went over this morning and did some air testing and checked the ventilation system. They found no problems," Pattison said. "We left with an agreement from the owner that he is to contract with a bacteriological laboratory to come in and test for specific molds in specific places."

Some of those working in the three-story facility, especially on the first floor where Ohio Bureau of Rehabilitative Services workers meet with clients, have complained for over a year about allergies and other health problems they believe are related to building conditions.

In March 1997, a state inspection showed mushrooms growing in the basement carpeting and potentially deadly stachybotrys mold flourishing in wet areas of the structure along with other fungi. The problems were corrected then, according to Buttle, who said the building was then given a clean bill of health. State administrators have yet to receive medical corroboration from any of the workers concerning their complaints.

Some employees have started seeing clients at the Goodwill Industries facilities several blocks away rather than expose them to the building.

According to Pattison, areas that had been considered problem areas before showed no visible signs of problems now. "The problem is that sometimes getting a professional laboratory to come right away isn't feasible because of the lab's schedule. It also will take time for the analysis," said Pattison, who plans to monitor the project since it took 14 months after testing before the last report was made available.

Pattison said the Health Department will work with Buttle and Tri-State and wait for the results from the laboratory. Pattison said the owner is to confer with him on the results as soon as they are received.

All content © 1998 AKRON BEACON JOURNAL and may not be republished without permission.

All archives are stored on a SAVE (tm) newspaper library system from MediaStream Inc., a Knight-Ridder Inc. company.