

Workers Accuse State Of Covering Up Mold In Building

Pending Lawsuit Claims Officials Did Not Disclose Health Hazard

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SACRAMENTO -- A lawsuit that is in the works claims that state government officials covered up a potential health hazard at a state building.

Four women claim that there is evidence that state government managers covered up the fact that mold was growing inside the state Board of Equalizations building. The woman said photographs obtained by KCRA3 show evidence of the cover-up, which could involve as many as 2,200 state employees and state government managers.

At issue is a state government memo admitting that two types of mold were discovered in the walls between the 22nd and 23rd floors. One type, stachybatrus, is considered toxic.

"I'm actually very sick about it. I didn't go to work because I'm sick to my stomach to think I sat there," said Wendy Schroeder, who works in the building.

The building under question is the same one that in years past has seen two inside water pipes break and had seven windows fall from upper floors. The women involved in the lawsuit said there also is evidence that managers within the Board of Equalization knew of the mold problem long ago but never told employees.

A lawsuit is being developed based on allegations of an intentional cover-up.

"It's pretty clear they were aware mold was likely to grow in that building," said Anthony Perez, an attorney for the state workers, who said that he believes dozens of state workers have ongoing health problems because of the building.

Officials from the Board of Equalization said air samples have repeatedly shown no danger to employees.

"There is no cover-up," said Board of Equalization spokeswoman Anita Gore. "We are going with the best information we have. Officials tell us the air is good. We have no problems. We have to believe that."

State officials said KCRA3 was not allowed to enter the building for safety

reasons.