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Chronicling civil-service life for California state workers

October 11, 2011

Headquarters problems prompt Equalization staff meetings



The Board of Equalization is in the midst of employee meetings scheduled for today and Wednesday to talk about its leaky, mold-infested, mechanically unreliable, slightly toxic headquarters at 450 N St. in Sacramento.

The building has been a money pit for the state and an unnerving place to work for many of the 2,900 or so employees who work there. The building's landlord, the **Department of General Services**, has spent millions of dollars on things like replacing leaky windows, fixing busted pipes, cleaning up toxic mold and repairing malfunctioning elevators.

Recently, employees complained of an **odor** on the 21st floor of the building after it had been cleaned up. Inspectors found low levels of **benzene and carbon disulfide**. Although the amounts detected were within government limits, officials still had to post signs noting the presence of toxics at the

worksite.

Repairs shut down one of two elevators to the building's garage. That put an excessive workload on the functioning elevator, causing its motor to **overheat and shut down**.

The work on the elevators is done and "**entrapments are fewer**," said board spokeswoman **Anita Gore**. Another company will inspect the work to make sure it was done correctly, she said.

Inspectors also found **mold** in a heating and air conditioning unit. Air tests haven't detected any toxics from the unit, Gore said. Mold has plagued the 24-story building since at least 2007. DGS launched remediation work not long after that. The work should be done by the end of 2011.

The BOE's five members called for the town hall meetings to give employees a chance to ask questions and express their concerns about the building, Gore said. "It's not the first time that we've done this," she said this afternoon.

The BOE leases the property and wants to move into another facility. Even if the building is clean and works correctly, it's too small, Gore said, since it's designed for 2,200 employees. The board leases space around Sacramento, but "we would love to come together in one complex," she said.

Here's the e-mail from BOE Executive Director **Kristine Cazadd** about the meetings. [This link opens the BOE's "Headquarters Building Assessment" page](#), which chronicles the structure's history, and links to various reports and updates.

PHOTO: *The Board of Equalization headquarters at 450 N. Street in Sacramento / Sacramento Bee file photo.*

Categories: Business of Government

Posted by **Jon Ortiz**

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riooso

I have seen first hand the attitude of the people that work at that building. Sickies looking for their ticket to never to have to work again.....any excuse will do!

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followlikesheep

It is unbelievable to me that the state hasn't moved BOE out of that building. 2900 employees = 2900 lawsuits just waiting to happen, all of which will certainly result in more losses to the state than moving the Board out. Its absolutely insane. There are probably people out there trying to get a job at BOE just so they can sue the state and get \$\$.

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**snowboarder96067**

Who is responsible for building this monstrosity and which prison do they presently call home? Common Bee, help me out here. You make this sound like this was some type of ineptitude at the government level because "State general services" owns the building. State workers did not design or construct this haunted house. They have unfortunately suffered the consequences of another low bidder being awarded taxpayer money. So who is responsible?

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**onionhead**

So, one of my family members tells me BOE is a dump. They're really arrogant and they have a lot of issues. What's worse is they purchased that dump from PERS who built it and got rid of it. That would label BOE a bunch of suckers. Too bad we get stuck with their bill from their incompetence.

BOE is notorious I hear. They had a IT manager who I'm told is the wicked witch of the west. I'm told they move them around to other places to ruin and destroy other staff. I'm told the state just rotates the same lousy management from place to place, and they really improve nothing.

It appears audits and interviews need to be completed . We should allow the employees of these departments to air their opinions on management and their decisions. Why didn't someone lose their job over this fiasco? It appears the state civil service needs an overhaul if this is the best they can do, especially for the money they don't deserve.

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**auntielili**

Sounds as if your family member is a whining union member. If you don't know the true facts, don't spread gossip.

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**onionhead**

Actually, they're non-union germane to collective bargaining, so shut your trap. How's that?

Yesterday 12:51 PM in reply to auntielili Report Abuse

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**quizas**

BOE should have been consolidated with FTB way before now. The redundancies are costing us alot of money! There are other buildings these folks can move to. The state is looking at being sued for health reasons in the future!

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Camptrip

They will just write a check, the taxpayers can afford it.

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rdude

How did they get the bottom of the barrel of state buildings? Oh yeah, the government tried to save money. Ya get what ya pay for!

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Wakan Tankan Nici Un

Probably built on ancient Indian burial grounds.

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