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Water break sends 275 BOE employees home

Sacramento Business Journal - by [Celia Lamb](#) Staff writer

About 275 Board of Equalization employees remain on paid administrative leave following a water break Sunday and a mold investigation at its headquarters at 450 N St. in Sacramento.

About 2,200 people work in the building, and the board is continuing to administer tax and fee programs, according to a news release.

The state Department of General Services was working in the building Sunday afternoon when a hose broke, releasing 5,000 to 8,000 gallons of water, Board of Equalization spokeswoman Anita Gore said. They diverted most of it to a stairway.

The eighth and ninth floors were closed to employees on Monday, and about 275 to 280 people were notified that they would be on paid administrative leave, Gore said. About 75 to 80 people have returned to work in alternate locations or are telecommuting. She said there was no estimate yet of when the other employees would be able to return.

"We are doing air tests," Gore said. "Mold was found on several floors. It currently is under containment."

The building has a history of mold problems. The agency closed the 22nd through 24th floors in fall 2007 after air tests found water damage and spores of *Stachybotrys* and *Chaetomium* mold. The 11th floor was closed after a flood in March 2008.

The board has hired a consultant, Hygiene Technologies International, to conduct air testing. More than \$29 million has been spent on building repairs in recent years, including \$15 million to replace seals around the 4,500 windows in the curtain wall skin of the building's exterior.

The building is overcrowded, and the board is working with the Department of General Services to find space for 500 employees in the Sacramento area. The board is also looking for alternate space that could eventually house the entire headquarters staff.



Noel Neuberger

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