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5 ON YOUR SIDE

# Mold Grows When Lowe's Home Improvement Project Goes Awry

Posted 2:06 p.m. Feb 14, 2008 — Updated 8:15 a.m. Feb 15, 2008



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**RALEIGH, N.C.** — Most installations done by big home-improvement stores go as planned. But when a Raleigh woman discovered an alarming problem with her cabinets and Lowe's Home Improvement would not fix it, she called 5 on Your Side.

Pull out the stove in Jean Coley's home, and the wall behind it is covered in mold.

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“I was in the bottom of the cabinet, and I felt wetness, and I said to myself, 'That's not water,'” Coley said.

A friend found the source: a major cabinet installation error.

A worker had put a cabinet screw into a sewage pipe in the wall behind it. That sewage pipe slowly leaked for more than three years. Coley's friend documented evidence of damage to the floor and joists.

“It is gross, looking at it there. And that's what I've been living with, that mold,” Coley said.

When Coley called Lowe's last August, a representative came to her house, assessed the damage and submitted a claim. When she called Lowe's to follow up, she said, the company blamed the sub-contractor. The sub-contractor said he was not responsible, Coley said.

“I look at it this way: Lowe's is supposed to fix it and deal with their sub-contractors after, instead of putting me through the stress of waiting all this time, with the inconvenience of not being able to use my bathroom and toilet upstairs,” Coley said.

After months of back-and-forth with no resolution, Coley called 5 on Your Side, and we called Lowe's.

The company immediately sent Coley a letter offering \$1,800 for the visible damage and to work out additional payment once she gets estimates. Coley is in the process of getting those estimates.

A Lowe's spokeswoman would not talk about why Coley's complaint got held up for so long in the first place.

Coley said she won't be relieved until the mold and mildew mess in her kitchen is finally fixed.

“It hurts my heart. It's painful going through it (the experience).

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