

"Sick" Building Makes Firefighters Sick

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A local fire station is shut down after firefighters were constantly getting sick.

Turns out it was the building that's sick. Investigators discovered the facility has Sick Building Syndrome.

Suwannee County firefighter Jon Cummings worked at Fire Station 3 in Branford for two years.

He says he kept coming down with colds and coughs over that period of time.

Cummings said, "I just assumed it was my daughter bringing home something from school. I never really gave it much thought."

Several other complaints from firefighters finally prompted testing, which concluded that the station had Sick Building Syndrome (SBS.)

SBS is a combination of ailments associated with an office building or home.

Charlie Conner, Suwannee County Public Safety Director, said "Landwise in Lake City, they did the testing and they found both white mold and Penicillin mold in the building. They advised me that we should vacate the premises immediately."

Mold can grow almost anywhere there's enough moisture or high humidity.

The effects of too much of it, which are also symptoms of SBS, include: nasal irritation, dry cough, skin rashes, shortness of breath, infections, memory problems, mood swings, and body aches; among others which Suwannee County firefighters experienced.

"Bloody noses, bleeding, coughing up blood; just general wise flu-like symptoms." Said Conner.

Sallie Ford, the Environmental Health Director at Suwannee County Health Department, said, "Elderly people, babies, children, and people with respiratory problems are at higher risk."

Branford firefighters have moved to a rental property until officials determine if the fire station needs to be cleaned or demolished.

The matter is scheduled to be discussed at next Tuesday's Suwannee County Commission meeting.

If you believe you're affected by Sick Building Syndrome, call your physician.

Source: <http://www.wctv.tv/home/headlines/35926639.html>