



Every day, Clark Seif Clark professionals are deployed across the nation helping both large and small customers resolve health & safety, industrial hygiene, environmental and indoor air quality issues.

At a moment's notice, Clark Seif Clark can send their experts anywhere they are needed. No matter if it's in response to a hurricane, wildfire, flood, tornado, or other natural disaster, Clark Seif Clark is ready to help and can respond in no time at all.

Occupational Allergens May Exist Everywhere from High-Rise Office Buildings to the Factory Floor

It may be hard for everyone to accept, but some people are actually allergic to their work. For countless employees in a wide range of professions, occupational allergens can make it difficult, if not impossible, to be a productive employee.

Occupational allergies occur when a worker is exposed to a substance or substances that cause them to have an allergic reaction. The situation may be the result of environmental allergens already in the workplace, such as mold in a water damaged office building, or due to activities that expose workers to allergens from materials they come into contact with because of their profession. These reactions can be mild or severe, and in some extreme circumstances could even be life threatening. Long-term exposure to allergens can even result in asthma in some people.

"An allergic reaction may occur when an allergen comes in contact with a worker through common exposure routes such as skin contact, inhalation or ingestion," said Franco Seif, President of Clark Seif Clark (CSC). "Quite often they will have a reaction within a short time period, but this is not always the case and the

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reaction may be delayed. In addition, repeated exposures to the allergen may increase sensitivity and even workers who did not previously show symptoms of an allergic reaction to a substance may develop an allergy to it over time."

Some of the more common environmental allergens workers may be exposed to include everything from mold, pollen, latex and dust mites to allergens associated with pets, cockroaches and rodents. While many people are aware of these allergens, there are also many others that employees may not readily recognize. These include substances such as formaldehyde; isocyanates; chromium, nickel and cobalt; and wood and floor dusts to name just a few out of hundreds.

The indoor environmental quality professionals at CSC are experts at identifying both chemical and microbial allergens in the work environment. Their experts have been called upon across the country to investigate and resolve cases associated with occupational allergens. CSC also recently sponsored an educational video about occupational allergens that can be seen here:



To learn more about this or other indoor air quality, occupational, environmental, health and safety testing services, please visit www.csceng.com, email csc@csceng.com or call (800) 807-1118.

Preventing Common Sources of Water Damage and Mold Growth

One of the most common reasons for an insurance claim in a commercial or residential property is due to water damage. Water damage can be caused by many factors, including natural flooding events, leaking roofs and windows, indoor plumbing leaks and even sewer backups.

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Is It Safe?

The presence of water indoors can damage or destroy building materials, furnishing and belongings, and in some circumstances can even result in structural damage. Depending on the source of water, it may contain bacteria, mold, viruses and chemical contaminants.

Even water damage due to clean water can result in the growth of mold indoors in less than 48 hours if materials are not properly dried. Once mold begins growing indoors it can quickly cause air quality issues for building occupants. Mold is a known allergen, respiratory irritant and an asthma trigger. Some molds produce toxins, known as mycotoxins, and some types of mold can cause infections in people, especially anyone with a weakened or suppressed immune system. The dose-reaction relationship is not known at this time and for that reason, it is best to cleanup mold as soon as possible.

While there may be limited things property owners and managers can do in flood prone areas to prevent a natural flood, there are precautions that can be taken to prevent water damage from many other sources. They include the following:

- Check basements and crawl spaces for signs of leaks, moisture and elevated humidity levels.
- Inspect any exposed plumbing for signs of condensation, corrosion and leaks.
- Consider having the property's sewer line inspected for signs of failure and existing blockages to prevent a sewer backup.
- Regularly check washing machine hoses and be sure to replace them if there are any signs of cracking or bulging.
- Inspect ice maker connections for signs of damage and replace when necessary.
- The water heater should be regularly inspected for signs of leaks and corrosion. Drip pans installed below the water heater that drain to the outside can prevent costly damage. Check the life expectancy of the water heater and consider replacing it at the end of its useful life.
- If the property has an air conditioner, be sure the drain lines are not clogged.
- Check under sinks, garbage disposals and around tubs and showers for any signs of leaks.
- Inspect around drinking fountains and toilets and check the toilet's internal components for any signs of leaks, wear or damage.

People who have experienced water damage or suspect it may have occurred in the past can turn to the building science and indoor environmental quality professionals at Clark Seif Clark. Their staff of experts can identify, resolve and help to prevent water damage, mold growth and indoor air quality issues. Clark Seif Clark also recently sponsored an educational video about common interior sources of water damage that can be seen here:



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About Clark Seif Clark: CSC was established in 1989 to help clients in both the public and private sectors address environmental issues. CSC is a leading provider of these services with multiple offices along the western seaboard and southwest. The company believes in science-based protocols and has a strong background in engineering making them the preferred environmental consultants to healthcare facilities, architects, schools, builders, contractors, developers and real estate professionals.